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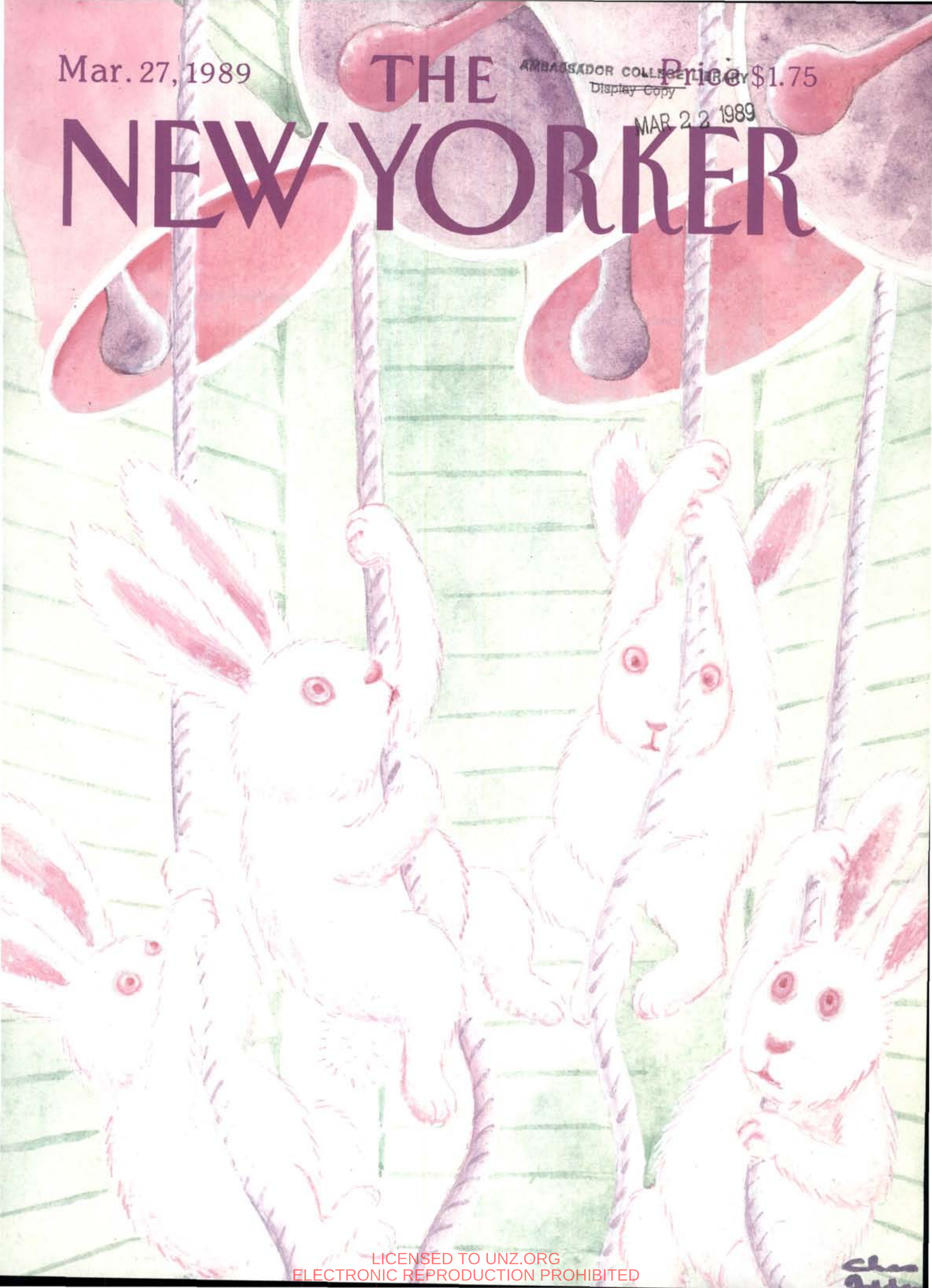

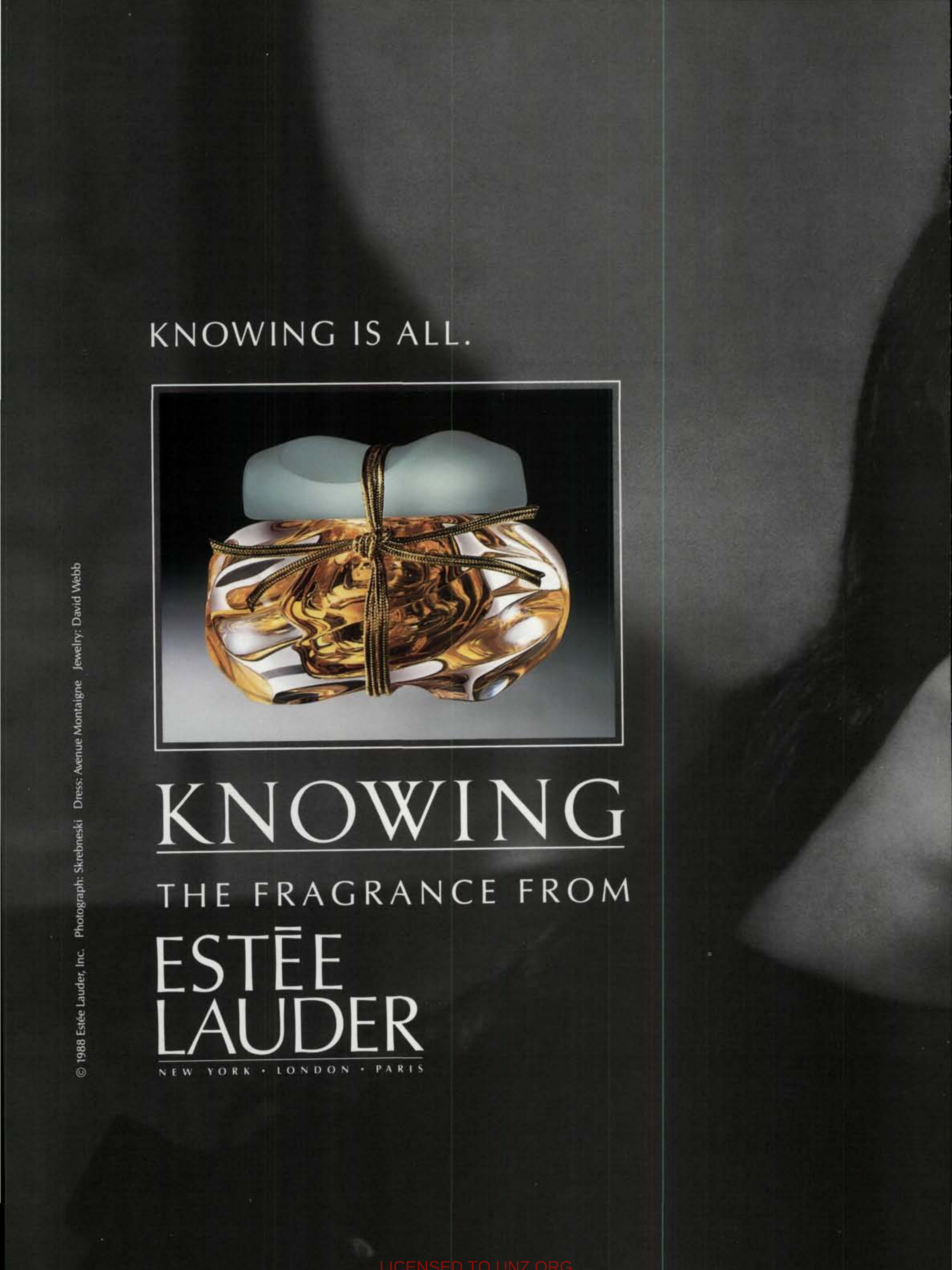
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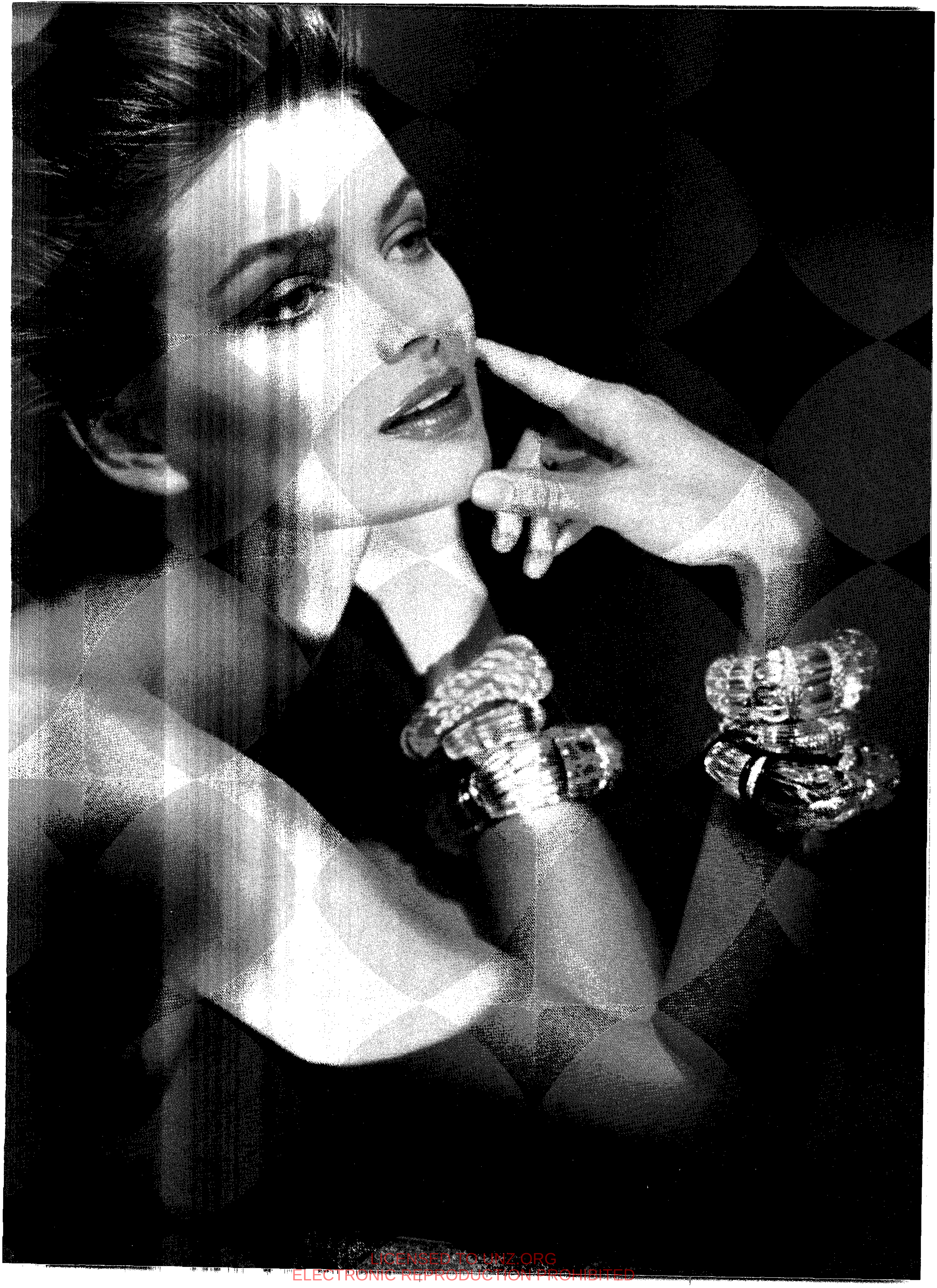

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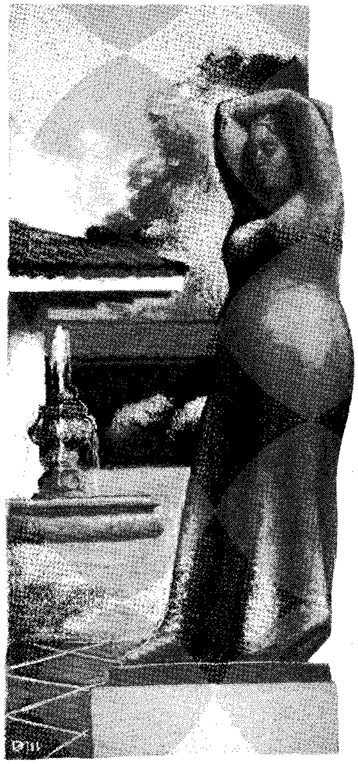

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

MARCH 27, 1989

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 4
THE TALK OF THE TOWN 33
"SHORT EASTER" . . . . *John Updike* 38
"A SONG" (POEM) . . . . *Joseph Brodsky* 40
"THE PHOTO ALBUM" . . . . *Sergei Dovlatov* 43
"REPARATIONS OF SPRING" (POEM) . . . . *Revan Schendler* 46
PROFILES (MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN) . . . . *Calvin Tomkins* 48
A REPORTER AT LARGE (PIE) . . . . *Sue Hubbell* 75
MUSICAL EVENTS . . . . *Andrew Porter* 90
THE THEATRE . . . . *Mimi Kramer* 93
PERSONAL HISTORY (FORT PECK DAM) . . . . *M. R. Montgomery* 94
"WHITE HAWTHORN IN THE WEST OF IRELAND" (POEM) . . . . . . *Eavan Boland* 111
BOOKS . . . . *Terrence Rafferty* 112
  BRIEFLY NOTED 114

COVER: *Charles Addams*

DRAWINGS: *Robert Weber, Bernard Schoenbaum, Eric Teitelbaum, Danny Shanahan, Edward Frascino, William Hamilton, Roz Chast, William Steig, Leo Cullum, Michael Maslin, J. B. Handelsman, Kelynn Z. Alder, George Booth, Ed Fisher, Frank Modell, Charles Barsotti, Richard Cline, Jack Ziegler, Al Ross, Mick Stevens, Lee Lorenz, Robert Mankoff*

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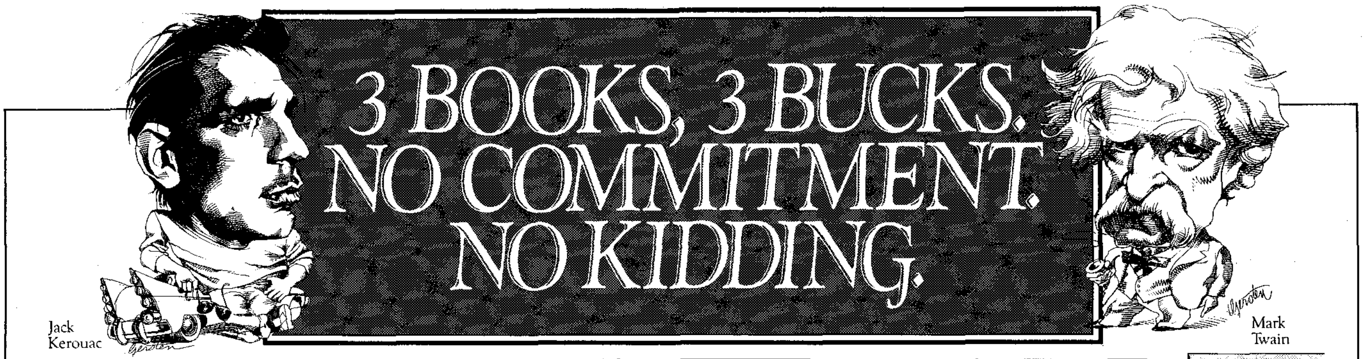
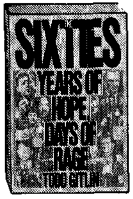

3 BOOKS, 3 BUCKS.
NO COMMITMENT.
NO KIDDING.
Jack Kerouac
Mark Twain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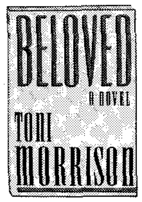
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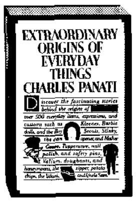
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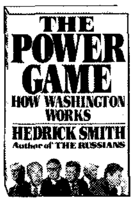
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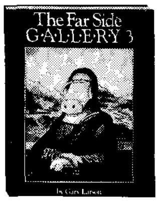
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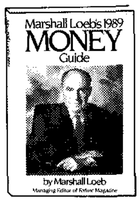
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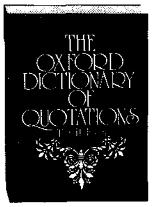
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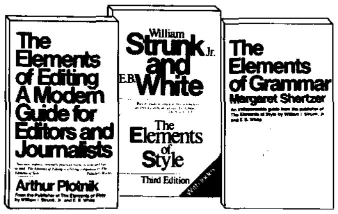
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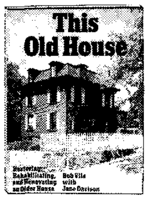
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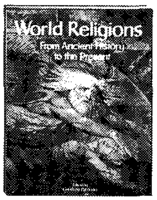
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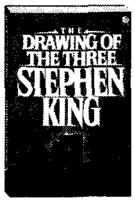
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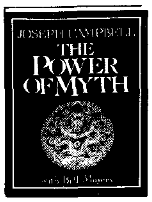
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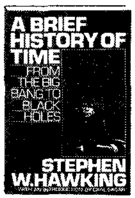
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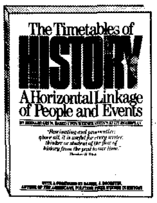
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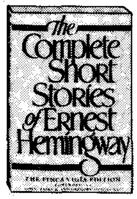
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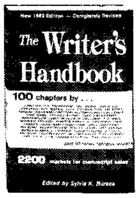
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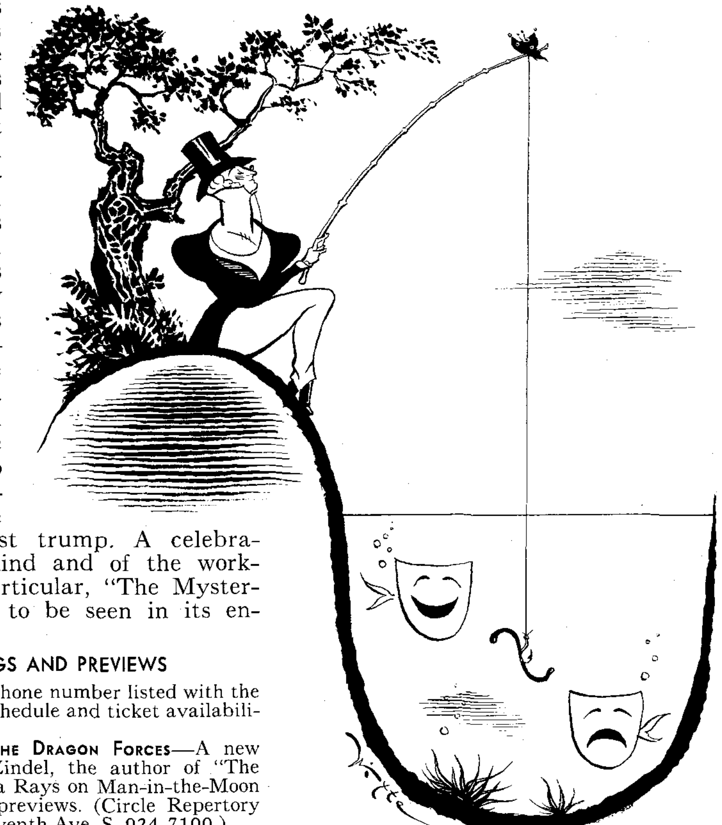
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

On Saturday, March 25th (the day before Easter), between 8 and 10 P.M., "The Passion," the second part of a three-part cycle of "mystery" plays, will be broadcast on WNYC Channel 31. Staged by the National Theatre of Great Britain in 1985 and filmed before a live audience, "The Mysteries" is one of the crowning achievements of institutional theatre.

Mysteries were Biblical pageants, written in a highly alliterative verse form and performed, on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, by the trade guilds of the towns where they were held. (A mystery in pre-Elizabethan parlance was simply a craft or a trade.) One reads these plays in school without remembering much more about them than a few isolated details: Noah's wife, in "Noah's Flood" (generally held to mark the invention of domestic comedy); Mak the Sheep-Stealer, from the Wakefield cycle's "Second Shepherds' Play" (generally held to mark the invention of the subplot); and phrases like "the York realist" and "the Wakefield master."

The National Theatre "Mysteries," which conflates the York and Wakefield with other cycles, is a testament to the importance of erudition—love or knowledge of the material—in the creation of a truly populist theatre. Performed promenade style, to the accompaniment of traditional and popular music, in an adaptation (by the poet Tony Harrison) that preserves the Northern dialect in which the plays were written, the production emphasizes working-class culture: the theatre is decorated with dart boards and kitchen implements; God appears on a forklift; Christ wears the baggy white overalls of a house-painter; the mouth of a steam shovel represents the entrance to Hell; a factory whistle blows the last trump. A celebration of mankind and of the workingman in particular, "The Mysteries" deserves to be seen in its entirety.



OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for the schedule and ticket availability.)

Amulets Against the Dragon Forces—A new play by Paul Zindel, the author of "The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds." In previews. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

Don Juan of Seville—A new translation by Lynne Alvarez of Tirso de Molina's classic "El Burlador de Sevilla." With Jeffrey Nordling and Robert Langdon-Lloyd. In previews. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

The Forbidden City—Gloria Foster and Frankie R. Faison in a play by Bill Gunn, which is set in West Philadelphia in 1936. Directed by Joe Papp. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

The Member of the Wedding—Carson McCullers' 1950 play, based on her novel of the same name. With Esther Rolle as Berenice Sadie Brown and Amelia Campbell as Frankie Addams. In previews. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

Quintuplets—A comedy by Luís Rafael Sánchez, with Ivonne Coll and Roberto Medina; presented by the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre. Some performances are in English; the rest are in Spanish. Opens March 22 at 8, and will run through April 30. (304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

Temptation—The American première of a play by Václav Havel. With Courtney B. Vance and David Strathairn; directed by Jiri Zizka. Translated from the Czech by Marie Winn. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

The Winter's Tale—Mandy Patinkin, Diane Venora, Alfre Woodard, and Christopher Reeve head the cast in the eighth play in the Shakespeare Marathon. Opens March 21 at 6:15. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

NEW THIS SEASON

Black and Blue—An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, Savion Glover, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/6/89, under Dancing.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

Born Yesterday—Madeline Kahn's performance as Billie Dawn (the role that made Judy Holliday famous) is the only good thing about this revival of Garson Kanin's 1946 political fable. Ed Asner is entirely inadequate as the scrap-metal tycoon who makes the mistake of hiring a *New Republic* writer to educate his mistress. So, unfortunately, is Daniel Hugh Kelly, who plays the journalist. (2/13/89) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102.)

Cafe Crown—A revival of the late Hy Kraft's mash note to the Café Royal, a onetime Mecca for Yiddish actors, writers, and intellectuals on the Lower East Side. The play, first produced in 1942, is filled with jokes, most of which pay off. Eli Wallach, as a former star, Anne Jackson, as his wife, and Bob Dishy, as a busy, bossy waiter, play the leading roles in this fine production, directed by Martin Charnin. Santo Loquasto designed the gorgeous setting. (11/14/88) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099.)

Cantorial—Ira Levin's play about a young couple who move into a renovated apartment on the Lower East Side that was once a synagogue, only to find that the place is haunted (by the restless spirit of an intrusive cantor, no less). Anthony Fusco and Woody Romoff are cute as all getout playing, respectively, the young man of uncertain origins who finds himself wanting to be a Jew and the wise old bird who owns the deli across the street. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

Chu Chem—A show billed as the "first Chinese-Jewish musical." The book is by Ted Allan, the score by Mitch Leigh, and the lyrics by Jim Haines and Jack Wohl. Seen recently at the Jewish Repertory Theatre, the show has moved to Broadway. (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 246-0102.)

The Cocktail Hour—A dramatist returns to his native city in upstate New York to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more engaging. Under Jack O'Brien's direction, Nancy Marchand gives a marvellous performance as the hero's mother, and Holland Taylor, Bruce Davison, and Keene Curtis are fine, too. (11/7/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Eastern Standard—An imitation comedy that is as tedious as it is trendy. (11/14/88) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Equity Library Theatre—Presenting a Jerome Kern musical comedy from 1917, **LEAVE IT TO JANE**. The book and lyrics were written by Guy Bolton and P. G. Wodehouse. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. 663-2028. Closes April 2.)

Forbidden Broadway 1989—A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Roxie Lucas, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath—inspired mimics all. (9/26/88) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

Gus and Al—In Albert Innaurato's wry comedy, Sam Tsoutsouvas is Gustav Mahler, and a heavily padded Mark Blum is a dramatist named Albert Innaurato, who, saddened by the notices of his recent play, journeys back in time to 1901 Vienna. The performance, under David Warren's direction, is completely satisfying. Jennifer van Dyck is the sexy, glamorous Alma Schindler, disturber of the peace; Charles Janasz doubles as Sigmund Freud and an ape named Kafka. (3/13/89) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes March 26.)

The Heidi Chronicles—Wendy Wasserstein's new play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, led by Joan Allen. (12/26/88) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

I Could Go On Lip-Synching!—This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of

Was it 1928 or was it last night?

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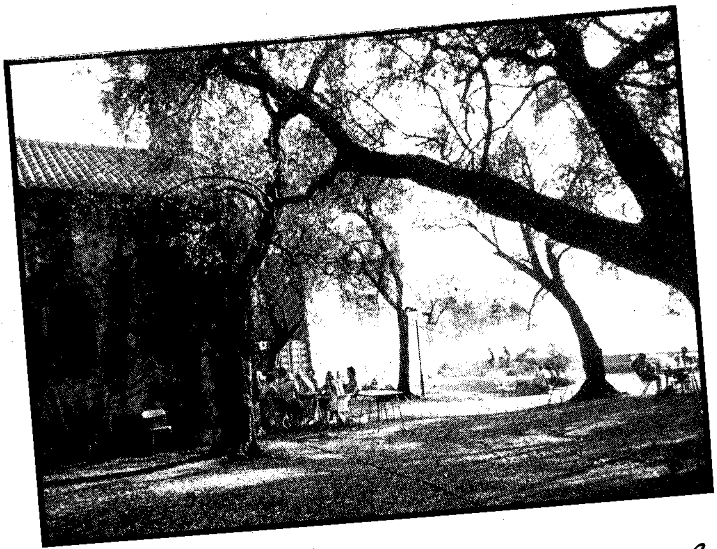

Two weeks ago (or was it six decades?) it took us to gemutlich Zagreb, where storks roost on tall chimneys. We sipped sweet, inky coffee and traded rounds of slivovitz, burning with essence of plums, with some local artists and came away only a few dollars poorer.

In the Julian alps, we tramped through the wildflower fields we could see from our snug, crisp-sheeted room. It was only $25. for the night. For a little more than twice that we could have stayed in its palatial counterpart, cushiony with damask sofas and Persian carpets.

On up the coast that could have been the Riviera of Hemingway, Fitzgerald or Cole Porter, we hired a cruiser for the day ($35.) and found a whole island we could have rented for the night.

Back at our hotel, we dined on a mountain of prawns with a delicious local wine that wouldn't be found anywhere else. The check didn't come to $30., including the moonlight.

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brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. Certainly this is the strangest show in town. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556.)

Jerome Robbins' Broadway—A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. The evening is an orgy of family entertainment, a display of theatrical arts and crafts, and a canonization of Robbins and his era. Whether the fifties was your generation or your parents', this is the show for you. (3/13/89, under Dancing.) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Kathy and Mo Show: Parallel Lives—Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Lend Me a Tenor—The setting of this funny farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks's stunning direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. Philip Bosco, Victor Garber, Tovah Feldshuh, J. Smith-Cameron, Caroline Lagerfelt, Ron Holgate, Jane Connell, and Jeff Brooks make up the splendid cast. (3/13/89) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Lehár's **MERRY WIDOW.** (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

The Magic Act—Not even a cast that includes Anne O'Sullivan, Cordelia Richards, and Sam Schacht can save Laurence Klavan's play, about a preternaturally awkward, lonely, and servile young woman accused of murdering a couple she has worshipped since childhood. The play presents itself as a dark comedy, but the script, which consists mostly of failed one-liners, seems calculated to make depressed people feel better about themselves by presenting caricatures of those they envy or fear they might resemble. (Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. Closes March 26.)

Measure for Measure—Shakespeare's play, with Len Cariou, Kate Burton, and Jack Weston. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Metamorphosis—Steven Berkoff's one-act adaptation of the Kafka story, with Mikhail Baryshnikov in the role of Gregor Samsa. Spinach. (3/20/89) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

National Theatre of Great Britain—Presenting two plays in rotating repertory. **APART FROM GEORGE**, by Nick Ward, through March 24, and **MACBETH**, through March 25. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 307-7171.)

Other People's Money—A comedy by Jerry Sterner about a Wall Street takeover artist who tries to acquire a small family business. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Our Town—Don Ameche is now the Stage Manager in this revival of Thornton Wilder's masterpiece. With Roberta Maxwell, Peter Maloney, Frances Conroy, Helen Hunt, and Jason Gedrick. (12/19/88) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Pajama Game—This musical, first done here in 1954, seems as chipper as ever in its current revival by the New York City Opera, though at times it is overwhelmed by the imposing theatre. Even the familiar numbers—"Hey There," "Hernando's Hideaway," "Steam Heat," and "7½ Cents" among them—sound fresh and tuneful. The songs are by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross; the book is by George Abbott and Richard Bissell; and the ingenious settings and costumes are by Michael Anania and Marjorie McCown. With the ebullient Judy Kaye in the leading role, and Richard Muenz, Avery Saltzman, and Brooks Almy in support. (3/20/89) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Rumors—This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has ever written. It is acted to perfection by Christine Baranski, André Gregory, Mark Nelson, Ron Leibman, Lisa Banes, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (11/28/88) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Run for Your Wife!—Ray Cooney's sex farce about a bigamous cabdriver is vulgar, crass, and downright disgusting (also about fifteen minutes too long), but it has a certain camp appeal. Undeniably, its chief targets are women, wives, and homosexuality; you have to suspend all your finer feelings and better judgment in order to enjoy it. But it isn't really any more offensive than, say, an episode of "I Love Lucy." (3/20/89) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 977-9370.)

Shirley Valentine—Pauline Collins gives a funny, beguiling performance as a Liverpool housewife who, feeling herself engulfed by drab domesticity, flies off to Greece, where she finds a temporary lover and lives happily ever after. Miss Collins is the only actor, and she is backed every inch of the way by Willy Russell, who wrote the good play, and by Simon Callow, who directed it. (2/27/89) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Songs of Paradise—A musical based on the works of the Yiddish poet Itsik Manger. In Yiddish and English; with a book by Miriam Hoffman and Rena Berkowicz Borow, and music by Rosalie Gerut. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

The Taffetas—Four talented young women, impersonating a group of singing sisters, perform hits from the fifties. The show, conceived by Rick Lewis as a live broadcast from the early days of television, represents yet another trip down memory lane. Still, for what it is, it's very well done. With Jody Abrahams, Karen Curlee, Melanie Mitchell, and Tia Speros. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292.)

A Tale of Two Cities—Everett Quinton's over-the-top one-man version of Dickens' novel has Miss Pross literally hanging from the ceiling. Unfortunately, his performance is more spirited than it is consistently funny. Best is the word "BLOOD" scrawled on the bathroom wall. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

Together Again for the First Time—Jo Sullivan and her daughter Emily Loesser in a revue of show tunes, including some by Miss Loesser's father, Frank. (Kaufman. 534 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Closes March 26.)

What the Butler Saw—An impeccable revival of Joe Orton's mischievous 1969 farce, with Joseph Maher, Charles Keating, and Carole Shelley in the leading roles, and director John Tillinger at the helm. No institution in socialist England—religious or secular—goes unscathed (except domestic service; there are no butlers aboard). The production makes an unremittingly funny evening. (3/20/89) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes March 30.)

DARLING LIPS

With Donald Trump's recent purchase of the Plaza Hotel, Mai Tais at Trader Vic's may be an endangered ritual. However, exotic cocktails are always in rare bloom (and vice versa) on the Lower East Side. At Krua Lang, in Alphabet Land, your Blue Hawaii, Darling Lips, Whispering Love, or whatever else you select (from a two-hundred-and-five-page hardcover menu entitled "Mixed Cocktails Thai Style") isn't just decorated liquid—it's art. The place itself has an artistic sense of décor (the use of video-surveillance-camera cases as ceiling fixtures is especially original), but the pinnacle of design is the potable pleasure pavilions, each one served on an ornate silver pedestal five times the size of the goblet. You've heard about architecture as frozen music. Are you ready for architecture as frozen Daiquiri?

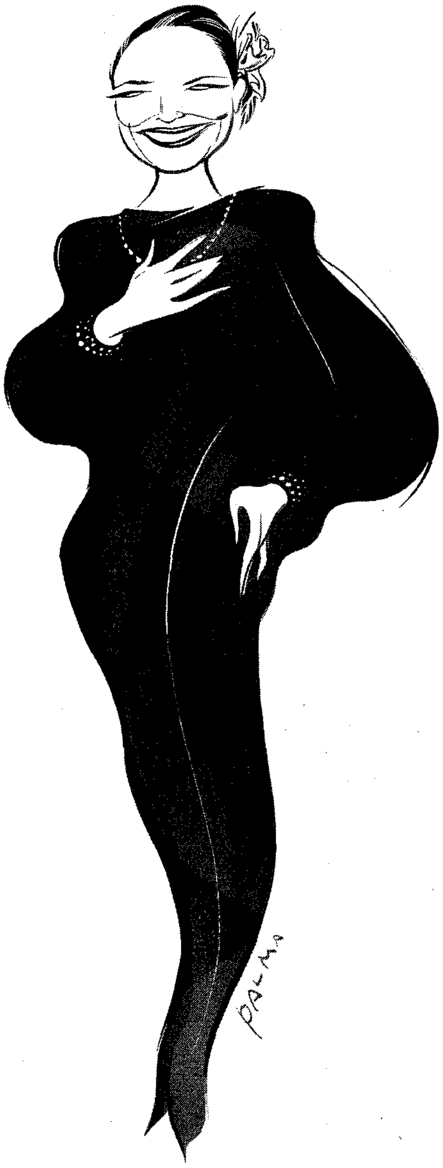
LONG RUNS

ANYTHING GOES: This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Leslie Uggams, Bill McCutcheon, and Howard McGillin, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction, and to the sets and costumes of John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run, which turns twenty-nine in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **INTO THE WOODS:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful and funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363.) . . . **M. BUTTERFLY:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with John Rubinstein and B. D. Wong. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The real stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OIL CITY SYMPHONY:** Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Michelle Horman, and Kathy Beaver, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny musical. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **SARAFINA!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)

DANCE

"IN certain respects, the Sylphide has been for me the same as she was for [her lover] James: a bad angel, whose poisonous breath has exerted its influence on every plant that sprouted in my path, and who did not tread lightly upon those leaves she would crush and ruin." The words belong to the Danish ballet master August Bournonville (1805-79), whose "La Sylphide" is part of the international repertory. Very rarely is the work presented in Bournonville's terms, as the story of a "bad angel" leading on a good man. It has become a drama of wild love springing up from a tame world. When the Sylph loses her wings, her sight, and her pointwork at the touch of the stole James uses to ground her, only the spirit of Bournonville cheers.

On Friday, March 24th, on Channel 13, Dance in America brings us "La Sylphide" as staged in 1985 by Peter Martins, with the assistance of the Royal Danish Ballet's Solveig Ostergaard, for the Pennsylvania Ballet (now the Pennsylvania and Milwaukee Ballet). It's a legible production, if a breathless one; on TV, James' visions, the villagers' reel, the Sylph's petite batterie, Effie's marriage to Gurn, and Madge's cackling revenge are dispatched within an hour. The plain farmhouse of the first-act set, by the painter Susan Tammany, serves the ballet's Romantic style, although in the second-act forest, the trailing white vines and aubergine tint anachronistically refer to later, more disturbed movements in art. The telecast, a recent performance at Philadelphia's Academy of Music, is directed by Merrill Brockway.



Julie Wilson at Michael's Pub

Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane & Co.—Final performances of the engagement. March 21 and March 25 at 8, and March 26 at 2: "The Gift/No God Logic," "Forsythia," and "D-Man in the Waters" (with the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble).... ¶ March 22-23 at 8, and March 25 at 2: "Freedom of Information, Section III," "Soon," "La Grande Fête," and "Absence."... ¶ March 24 at 8: "Soon," "The Gift/No God Logic," "Black Room," and "Chatter." After this performance, Bill T. Jones will answer questions from the audience. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

"Antología de la Zarzuela"—The most recent of José Tamayo's extravaganzas, imported from Madrid. With guest diva Victoria de los Angeles. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. March 21 at 7:30; March 22-24 at 8; March 25 at 2 and 8; March 26 at 3 and 7:30; and March 28-29 at 8. Through April 2.)

Center Dance Collective—With guest artist Bertram Ross, in a program of works by Ruth St. Denis, Doris Humphrey, and Ted Shawn. (Nikolais/Louis Choreospace, 38 E. 19th St. March 22-24 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-5653.)

Dances Patrelle—Francis Patrelle's new company, with guest artists Peter Boal, Judith Fugate, Cynthia Gregory, and others. (Florence Gould Hall, French Institute–Alliance Française, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6105. March 28-29 at 8. Through April 2.)

NIGHT LIFE

IN the early seventies, two young Village music bookers named Allan Pepper and Stanley Snadowsky bought a banjo-and-boater establishment called the Red Garter and turned it into a pop-music emporium called the Bottom Line. It opened in February of 1974, with Dr. John (in his Night Tripper duds) as the headliner. It had four hundred seats, food (burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster), a good sound system, and pretty good sight lines. It became the center of the world in August of 1975, when Bruce Springsteen walked on water five nights in a row, twice a night. Rock and roll made it prosper, but its something-for-everybody policy has made it interesting. One night the place will be full of old folkies in wire rims and serapes, and the next night it will be full of C. & W. fans wearing mesh ball caps.

This weekend's lineup—Cornell Dupree, Lucinda Williams—is typically varied. Cornell Dupree is a guitarist who has worked with King Curtis, Aretha Franklin, Brook Benton, and numerous other R. & B. acts. His playing is cool, dry, and full of open spaces, and it is a perfect foil for the sweaty, gospelly piano and organ of his boon companion Richard Tee. Dupree and Tee worked together in Stuff, a mid-seventies R. & B. sextet made up of topnotch New York studio musicians, and they work together in the Gadd Gang, as well as in Dupree's own band, Who It Is, which will be here on March 24th. Lucinda Williams, who performs March 25th, is a well-travelled country-rock singer who grew up all over the South and now lives in Los Angeles. She has a gritty voice, and writes grittily romantic songs. She's good when she's describing a crush or declaring a passion, and she's just as good when she's setting down the ways she intends to rid herself of a man.

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4th St.; 228-6300) start at eight and eleven Sundays through Thursdays, and at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—In the lobby, people come and go talking of the Forty-fourth Street Chowder and Marching Club, which used to meet here, and of Lerner and Loewe, who knocked out "My Fair Lady" here, and of Karen Mason, who is singing in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A big, soigné cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, in the heart of the fur and fashion-student districts. **LITTLE ANTHONY,** who, with the Imperials backing him up, sang "Hurt So Bad" and "Goin' Out of My Head" and other high-pitched songs of love and pain, performs March 21-25 at nine and eleven. The comedy team of **MONTEITH & RAND** commences a two-week stay on March 28.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A really blue but not really New York jazz club; the idea for the brass plaques that are engraved with the names of visiting jazz stars and embedded in the blue tables appears to have been borrowed from Hollywood. **NANCY WILSON,** a sleek pop-jazz singer, holds forth March 21-26. **JOE WILLIAMS,** the great Basie-band singer, turned seventy in December, but his big voice remains flexible and buoyant, and whatever he sings—an Ellington song, a blues, a supper-club ballad—he sings with ease and gentlemanly cool. He begins a week-long visit on March 28. First set at nine. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar, tucked between a supermarket and a greengrocery. In 1969, when Bradley Cunningham and a partner bought it, it was called the Stirrup. Its light is distinctive, something between dim generic tavern light and refined haze; its patrons are famously gabby; its piano, which Paul Desmond bequeathed to Mr. Cunningham, has been played by many first-rate musicians, including Jimmy Rowles, Tommy Flanagan, and Dave McKenna. Pianist **RICHIE BEIRACH** works with bassist **RON MC CLURE** and drummer **ADAM NUSSBAUM** through March 25. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—The "great savory *pot au feu* called New York" (in the words of Duke Ellington) has loads of West Indian restaurants, but not too many that feature name-brand jazz bands. **WILD BILL DAVIS,** a seventy-year-old organist who worked as an arranger for Louis Jordan in the forties and for Ellington in the sixties, leads a trio March 21-26. **ARTHUR PRYSOCK,** whose voice starts down in his knees and is suitable for romantic crooning, comes in for a week starting March 28. Music from nine-thirty.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a small, well-upholstered room decorated with quaint Marcel Vertès murals (a nude at her easel, a leaping poodle), is a place where time pretty much stands still. Peter Nero will be at the piano March 21-22. March 23-25 and the week beginning March 28 belong to singer Marti Stevens. Shows at ten and midnight Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—This room, which caters to thrash-metal buffs and cooler heads on weeknights, opens its doors on Sundays to swing-music fans, most of whom come to Lindy. The dancers are young, old, semi-pro, one hundred per cent amateur, happy, earnest, in love; shoe styles (men's) run from white bucks to clodhoppers to gleaming patent-leather jobs. George Gee & His Make Believe Ballroom Orchestra, a seventeen-piece band from Pittsburgh, will motivate feet on March 26. A tap dancer named Shorts Davis also performs. Activity from eight to midnight.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A long, rambling bar and restaurant with a white-trash-chicken-shack theme. The decorator went kind of hog-wild with all the old filling-station and soft-drink signs and the collection of hubcaps and the dime-store portrait of the King and the display of dozer caps and the shingle from the taxidermist in Spanish Fort, Alabama—but it's a friendly enough place. There's live music—gospel, blues, country, rock—every night of the week. Shows after nine. Dinin'.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—An Irish pub in the meat-packing district, not too far from the boondocks. In the front room, barbirds study the TV and growl about one thing or another, and in the back room another crowd listens to Irish folk musicians (on Fridays) and native string players (on Saturdays). Skip Healy and Bob Drouhin play flute-and-bouzouki duets on March 24; a slew of guitarists—including one non-native, an Italian flatpicker named Beppe Gambetta—picks and grins on March 25. Music from nine.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make you forget all about it. **HANK JONES,** who plays impeccable bop piano and whose long and impressive résumé includes a stint as Ella Fitzgerald's accompanist, will be here with bassist **DAVE HOLLAND** and drummer **KEITH COPELAND** March 21-26. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Tom Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—A satisfying combination of Chinese food and homegrown music. Rubbernecker may see the moon wheeling by the greenhouse roof on its regular tour of romantic Manhattan. **RALPH SUTTON,** a Missouri-born pianist whose robust style is rooted in Waller and the Harlem-stride tradition, lays his hands on the Steinway nightly, except Mondays. **JACK LESBERG** is on bass March 21-26; **MILT HINTON** takes over starting March 28. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

FANCY FOOTWORK

Some people have an easier time putting the family dog to sleep than tossing out a once-favorite pair of sneakers. Even the Enquirer *has yet to uncover someone who has been keeping a pile of old Shih Tzu in the bottom of his closet, but there is hardly a jogger, high-heel-hater, or sneakrophiliac who doesn't have a pyre's worth of dilapidated athletic shoes that he can't bear to throw out. The reason may be sentimental: one pair may be a discontinued model, like Avia 485s; another may have been instrumental in that first marathon. Almost all the pairs have two things in common: they still feel great, and it's not the tops that are worn out—it's the bottoms.*

Sneakers, however, can be resoled. "I guess a lot of people don't know that," says Tony at B. Nelson Shoe Repair, in the McGraw-Hill Building. You can bring your favorite old tennis doubles here in the morning and have them back with new treads in time to support your falling arches on the way home. There are limits, but B. Nelson's rarely turns tortured soles away, because, as Tony reports, "People come in and say, 'Don't laugh,' then hold up these nasty things with such affection. It's hard to say no. They get so insulted."

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor retreat that features avant-garde jazz, advanced and unadvanced rock, medicinal teas, medicinal beer, and space to think your thoughts in. March 21 and 28 belong to the **MICROSCOPIC SEPTET,** a downtown jazz ensemble that plays in the late-eighties Cuisinart style (mixing swing with Dixielandish stuff and free jazz and music that might go well with a B-grade science-fiction movie). **SONNY SHARROCK,** a raucous, bare-knuckled jazz-noise guitarist, leads a band March 24-25. Music after nine.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—This hangout for homesick Texans, French tourists, and local yokels brags that it's "the biggest and best honky-tonk north of Abilene." Big it ain't, but it does feature some genuine honky-tonk music, a souvenir stand, and TV monitors (which permit you to watch the action onstage in case your view of it is obscured by a cowboy or a structural element). The lineup: Shows after nine. Hot vittles.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—The midtown branch of the aforementioned establishment. The façade is a Silver Eagle bus, the kind your itinerant musician cat tools around in. The inside features some things you probably wouldn't find in a county-line roadhouse—like a wallful of de-luxe Gibson guitars or a tableful of corporate guys and gals whooping it up—and some you might expect to find: beer, neon beer signs, and a few men wearing dozer caps. **RUTH BROWN** spends her Mondays here, starring in her own R. & B. revue (the rest of the week, she's at the Minskoff, playing her earthy self in "Black and Blue"). The **OYSTER BAND,** an English folk-rock quintet that reworks trad tunes and hammers away at Thatcher's England, will be here on March 23. **JOE ELY,** who comes from Buddy Holly's home town (Lubbock) and has honest-to-God Texas dirt on his rock-and-roll shoes, performs March 24-25. Music after nine. Dining.

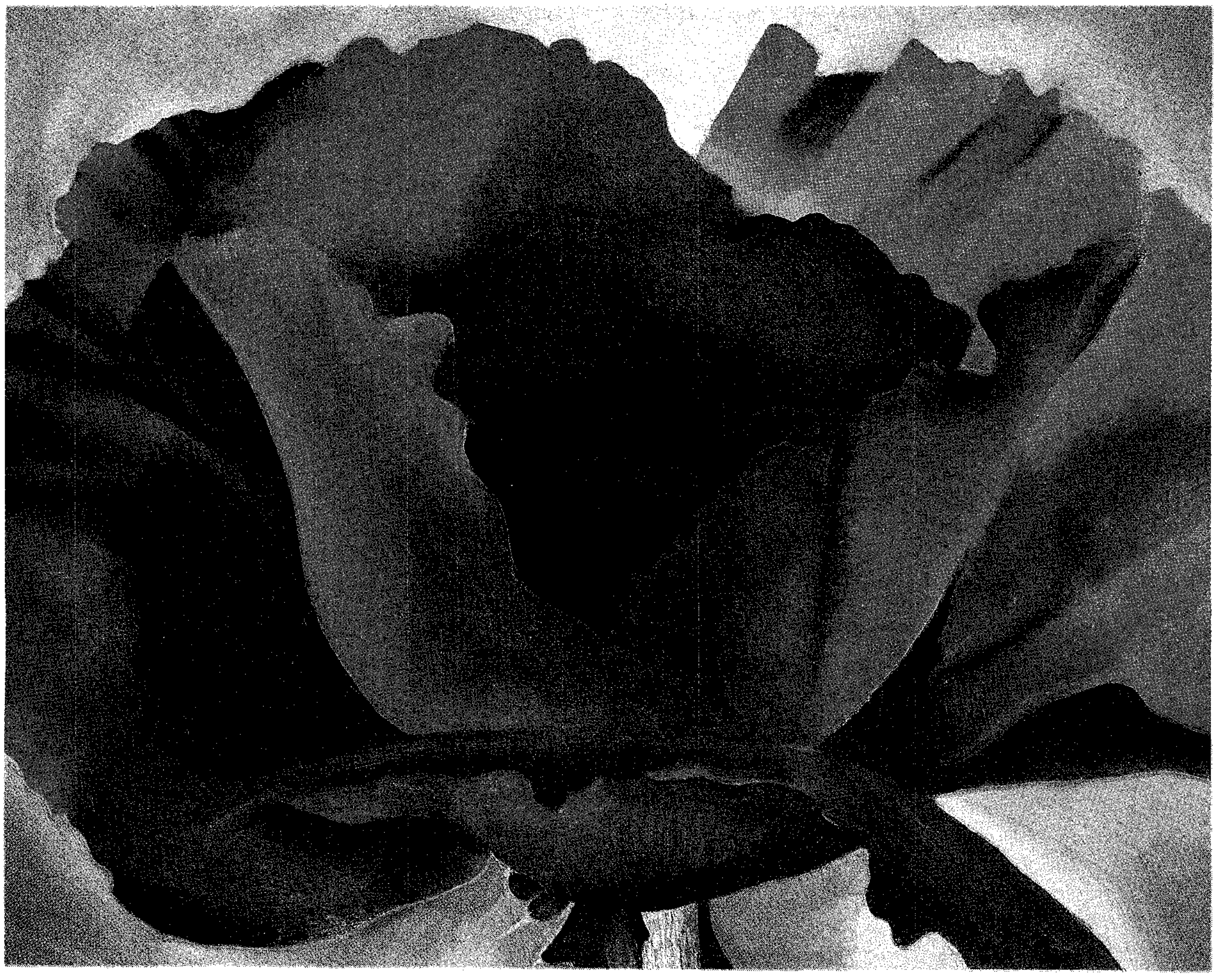
Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Henry VIII and a unicorn on the walls, well-heeled cats on the banquettes, and the svelte **JULIE WILSON** on the bandstand. Miss Wilson is concentrating on the proper nouns and risqué verbs of Cole Porter—something she's been doing off and on since the late forties, when she sang in "Kiss Me, Kate." Shows at nine and eleven Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A new, glossy, multilevel maroon-and-silver cabaret, seating about ninety, and located on the north side of the sixty-fifth floor in what used to be a cocktail lounge. The performers, working in a shallow well in the center of the room, do unwitting battle with the bejewelled backdrop of Central Park, Lenox Avenue, the G. W. Bridge, and points north. **UTE LEMPER,** a young German singer with a theatrical voice, performs March 21-25 at nine and eleven-fifteen. Starting March 28, the Broadway songs of **JERRY HERMAN** will be the subject of a show starring the composer himself, Lee Roy Reams, and Karen Morrow. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—The name that this large but ungrand rock room sports will soon be attached to the former premises of Studio 54, a place where celebrities and tourists used to go to have a good time. The Ritz's last hours at this site—it opened in 1980, and has withstood hard-core bands, metal bands, Jerry Lee Lewis, and others—will feature **SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY,** a blue-eyed soul man from the Jersey shore, on March 24 at eleven, and **RODNEY CROWELL,** a pretty fair country-rock singer-songwriter (as well as Rosanne Cash's main squeeze), on March 25 at nine.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Ample seating for the contemplative. The lineup: March 21, Bombay sitarist Ashwin Batish; March 22-23, Bahian singer Margareth Menezes; and March 24-25, Pé-De-Boi. Music from nine Sundays through

"Still–in a way–nobody sees a flower–really–
it is so small–we haven't time–
and to see takes time, like to have a friend takes time."
—Georgia O'Keeffe



Red Poppy, 1927 *Oil on canvas 7" × 9", Private collection, Geneva* *Photography by Malcolm Varon*

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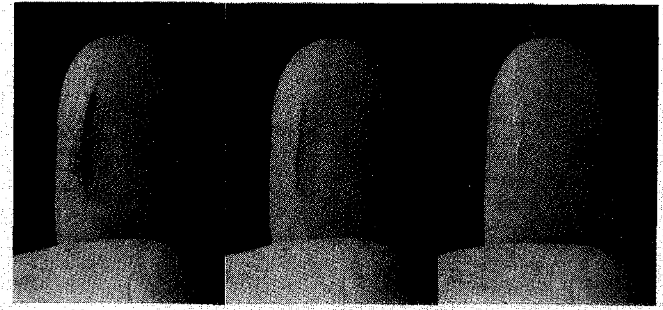
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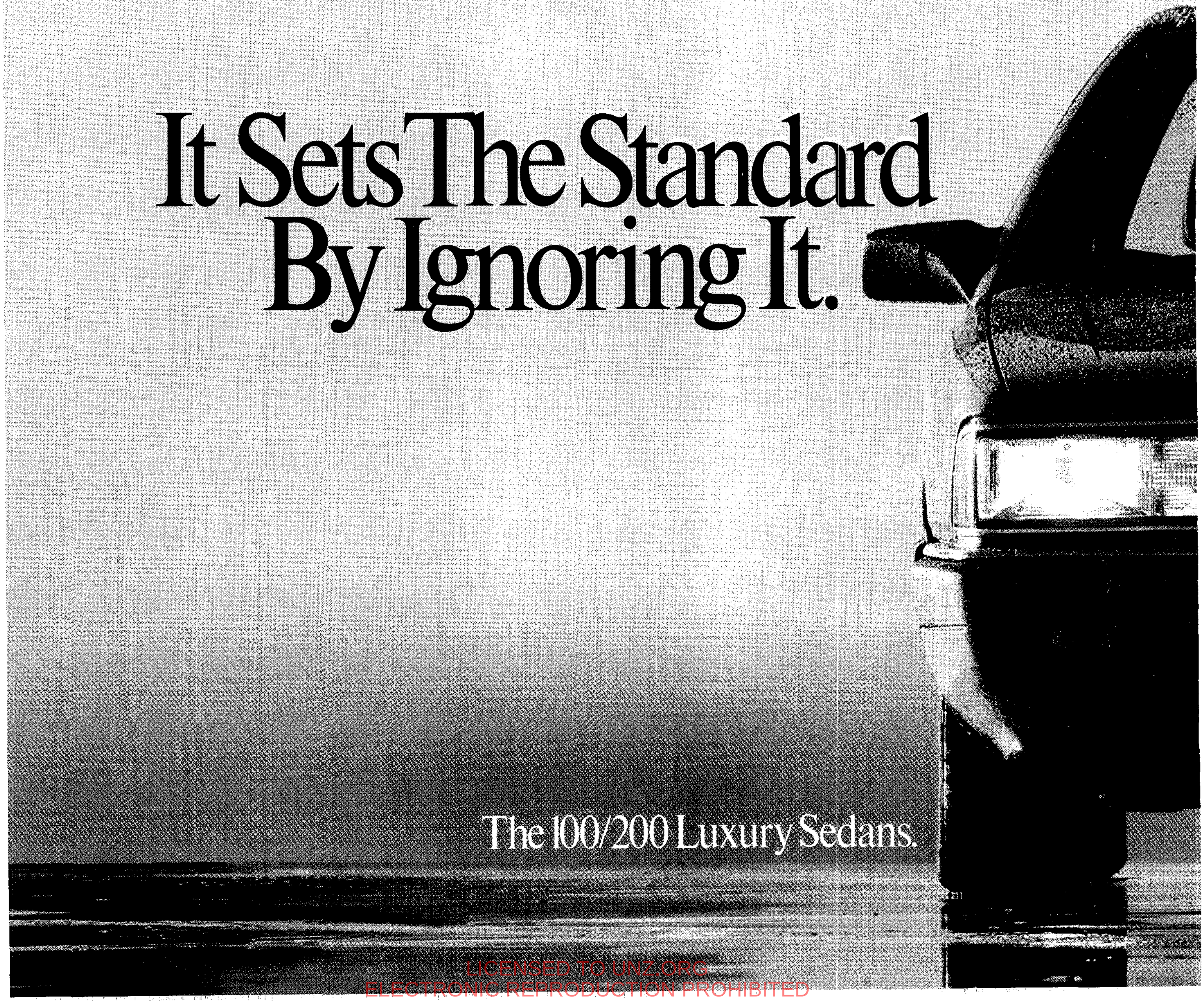

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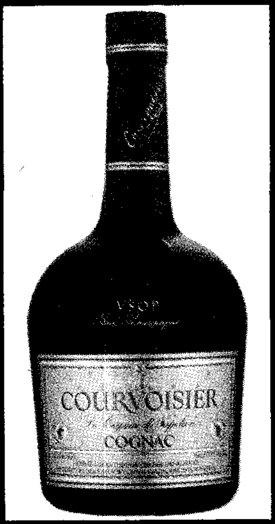
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Thursdays and from ten on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A quintet led by **ART FARMER,** a gentle-toned flugelhornist who sometimes recalls early Miles Davis, will be in this Village temple of jazz (pressed-tin ceiling, grainy b. & w. photos of your favorite demigods, knee-to-knee seating) Tuesdays through Sundays. The electrified big band that the late Gil Evans brought here on Mondays—it shimmered a little and rumbled a lot, while Evans, a hands-off conductor, let his soloists blow at length—is now fronted by his son, trumpeter Miles Evans, and directed by trumpeter **LEW SOLOFF** and pianist **GIL GOLDSTEIN,** and is in action on Mondays. Shows from ten. Dining.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the gym-size downstairs room, salsa bands play for listening and dancing on Mondays after nine. Wednesdays are rock nights. **ALBERT KING,** a bang-up blues guitarist and a man who says "whew" better than just about anybody, will be here March 24-26. Sets at nine and eleven.

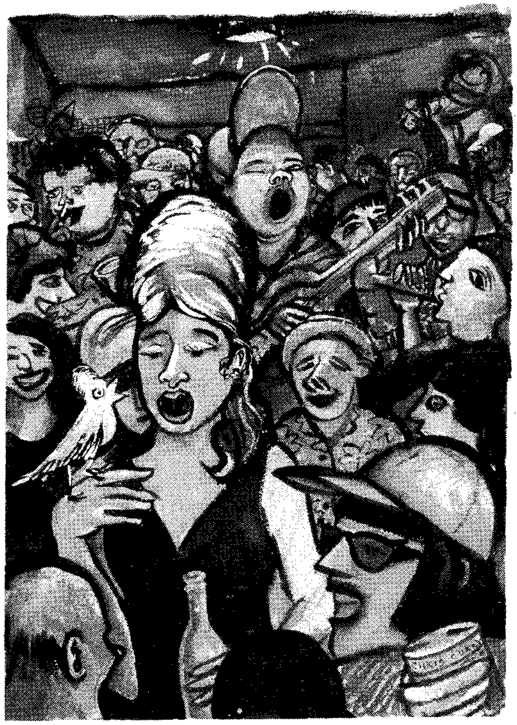
Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. **TOMMY FLANAGAN,** who, like his compeer Hank Jones, served as Ella Fitzgerald's accompanist and plays sparkling bebop piano, will be here March 21-26, with bassist **GEORGE MRAZ** and drummer **KENNY WASHINGTON. JOHNNY GRIFFIN,** an expatriate hard-bop tenor man, arrives with a quartet on March 28. Mondays are prime time for **MEL LEWIS'S** big band. Music from ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. The piano-bass team of **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and **CECIL MC BEE** is on duty Mondays through Saturdays from eight. Sundays are reserved for pianist **JUNIOR MANCE** and bassist **MARTY RIVERA.**

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

IN "Big," Josh Baskin wished he was all growed up. At Trixies, almost everyone wants to be twelve and behaves accordingly, singing along with the Monkees blasting through the speakers, ramming fistfuls of sweet-potato fries in their mouths, and an occasional one up a nostril. When Sly and the Family Stone exhort all to "dance to the music," into the aisles they go, blocking or dancing with plate-laden waitresses. Many of the same people who during the day market your software and leverage your buyouts sort of sit at tables of ten (dinner for two here is as out of place as the words "Excuse me"), clad in enough reversed baseball caps that they resemble a catchers' convention, periodically wailing "Happy Birthday" in several keys (Trixies averages three celebrants a night) and begging Trixie—in silver lamé bell-bottoms and her trademark Queen of the Nerds glasses and Ziegfeldian headdress—to dance with them. Trixie takes them all on with power to spare.

On Wednesday nights, however, not everyone wants to return to pubescence. Some want to be stars. Talent Night at Trixies can't promise the exposure of "Star Search," but it has a more enthusiastic audience, and the hostess is a lot more fun than Ed McMahon. When Joy, singing "Evergreen," begins with "Love, soft as an easy chair," Trixie admits with a wink, "I never got that line." Succeeding contestants range from promising to promise-you'll-stop. Ed Miller, a self-proclaimed exiled king of Dixieland, accompanies himself on "Stick out your can. Here comes the garbageman." An intimidating transsexual named Jénet Jones does a spiffy imitation of Tina Turner's "Private Dancer" to only middling applause. "She sings the same damn song every week," barks a regular. The winner, by two screams, is Dr. T, potential "Guinness Book of World Records" candidate for the World's Oldest Rapper. It's obvious he's not Trixie's favorite. But twelve-year-olds who don't get their way are impossible.



Talent Night at Trixies

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

The Circus—Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's hundred-and-nineteenth edition—the last with lion, tiger, and elephant trainer Gunther Gebel-Williams—opens March 23 and will run through April 23. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300.)

Alva Rogers—In songs and monologues written by Lisa Jones. (The New Museum, 583 Broadway. 219-1222. March 21 at 7:30.)

"Sunspot"—In John Jesurun's new work, six actors speak in Pinteresque cadences about television and rock and roll. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. March 22-26 at 8:30.)

Bill Callihan—In "Wild Bill from Olive Hill," Callihan sings and tells stories about his adolescent experiences, including the one about his Swiss girlfriend. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. March 23-25 at 10.)

Urban Bush Women—In excerpts from "Heat," "Bitter Tongue," and "Anarchy, Wild Women, and Dinah." (American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. March 29 at 7.)

ART

YEAR after year, returning from Basel, Bern, Lucerne, or Schaffhausen—or from any number of other small Swiss, German, Dutch, or Belgian towns—awed Americans used to bemoan the fact that we here in the States had nothing like the European *Kunsthalle* to call our own. The complainants very often were art dealers, and they usually concluded with the observation that *they* had somehow been saddled with the risky, critical role once performed by curators, and that museums looked to *them* for creative advice. Things, however, have changed again in the last couple of years, not least in New York. As the city's big museums keep on building, smaller institutions have reorganized themselves and gathered momentum, and the city can now claim something along the lines of Schaffhausen's lofty *Kunsthalle* as well.

The Dia Art Foundation—revamped but still high-minded—has for over a decade been known for its spare aesthetic, its munificence to artists, and, as many have said, its rather churchy approach to art. This place is without doubt an ivory tower, but its self-importance is justified by its purpose, and even by its style. The main Dia building, at 548 West 22nd Street, was designed to permit idyllic, long-term situations for demanding work. On the first exhibition floor, Francesco Clemente's suite of eleven lovely, consummately self-involved "Funerary Paintings" has been on view since autumn, while a sweeping selection of unbelievably subtle paintings by Robert Ryman has been making full use of large quantities of available light at the top. Now comes Jenny Holzer's brilliant, morbidly melodramatic installation—just opened, on the middle floor. Simultaneously foppish and hard-edged, Holzer's electronic message boards and inscribed stone tablets send out thoughts as decadent as Beardsley's and as tortured as Poe's. This is Art Nouveau for the age of information.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Musical instruments acquired over the past ten years, including two of Segovia's guitars and a set of Carleen M. Hutchins' contemporary violins, which come in different sizes—treble, soprano, mezzo, alto, tenor, baritone, and contrabass. . . . ¶ Photographs from William Henry Fox Talbot's "Pencil of Nature." (See Photography, below.) Through April 9. . . . ¶ "The Masterworks" of Frederic Remington. Through April 16. . . . ¶ The Costume Institute is exhibiting eighty-five outfits from the Victorian era. Through April 16. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The Andy Warhol retrospective. Through May 2. . . . ¶ A show of architectural design—models, drawings, and photographs of buildings—by Emilio Ambasz and Steven Holl. Through April 4. . . . ¶ Walker Evans' works. (See Photography.) Through April 11. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Refigured Painting: The German Image": A

ART—Cont'd

haphazard onslaught of Expressionism which attempts to make sense of German painting today but desperately needs editing in some areas and amplification in others. Lüpertz looks better than ever here, while Richter and Polke look trivial. Through April 23. (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An eye-opening retrospective of the work of Frederick Kiesler, including a reconstruction of the Surrealist room in Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century gallery. Through April 16. . . . ¶ A show of American folk art from the center in Williamsburg, Virginia, that is named for Abby Aldrich Rockefeller. The landmark collection, started in the twenties, identified and brought to public attention such painters (all represented here) as Ammi Phillips, Erastus Salisbury Field, and John Brewster, Jr. Through April 2. . . . ¶ A selection of sculptures from the sixties by Yoko Ono. Concurrently, films and videos by Ono are on view on the second floor. (See Film Libraries, below, for schedule.) Through April 16. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Sculptures and drawings by four outstanding American post-minimalists: Joel Fisher, Mel Kendrick, Robert Lobe, and John Newman. What they have in common is a feeling for inchoate form—shapes that look like evolutionary glitches and suggest old-fashioned views of the future. Through May 15. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Madagascar: Island of the Ancestors," opening on March 25, will feature a reconstructed village and about five hundred examples of jewelry, weaponry, and funerary sculpture. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—A hundred paintings and sculptures by twenty-nine artists who have been nominated for Academy-Institute art awards. Among the candidates are Lisa Lawley, Rackstraw Downes, and Stephen De Staebler. Through March 26. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—Highlights of the Zurich banker Pierre Uldry's collection of Chinese cloisonné. Through May 14. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"Traditions and Transformations: Contemporary Afro-American Sculpture" attempts to demonstrate the vitality of black artists working within the mainstream. Veteran sculptor Martin Puryear is not shown to best advantage, but Maren Hassinger is well represented by an alley of wavy, partially unravelled cables; Alison Saar by folk-inspired pieces with spooky ritualistic touches; and Melvin Edwards by "lynch fragments": chilling assemblages of locks, spikes, and chains. Through May 27. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A special exhibition of cityscapes of Venice by Francesco Guardi (paintings) and James McNeill Whistler (pastels and etchings), and of Paris by Charles Meryon (etchings). Henry Clay Frick acquired the works in the teens. Starts March 23. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—Intaglio prints by American landscape painters who learned how to etch plates and print them at the New York Etching Club in the eighteen-eighties. Among the artists who found a love for the medium were William Merritt Chase, Frank Duveneck, and Mary Nimmo Moran. Through April 1. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

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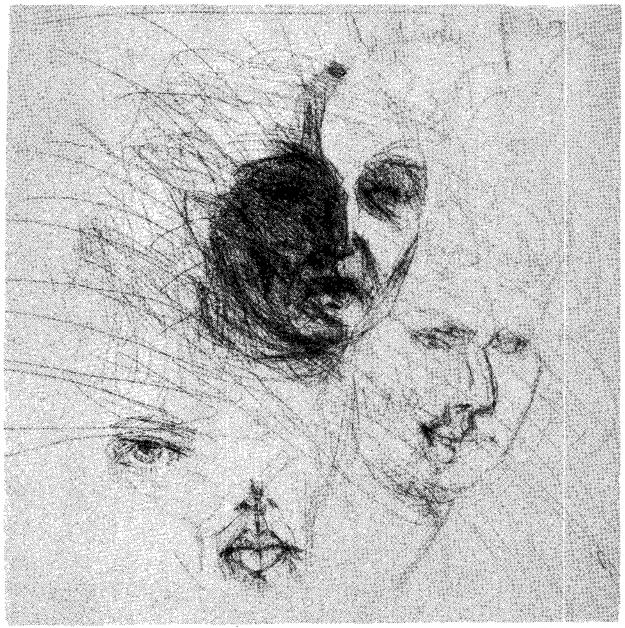
Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit examining the ways in which artists have found inspiration in the golem legend. Through April 2. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century drawings from Haarlem's Teyler Museum focusses attention on the contrasting purposes of Northern and Southern European draftsmanship. Through April 30. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St.—"¡Mira! The Canadian Club Hispanic Art Tour III" purports to represent the best Latin-American art being made in the United States today, but lacklustre paintings of what look like airbrushed realism, maudlin Expressionism, and academic abstraction make it seem like a college art show. There is, however, good work by Enrique Castro-Cid, Jorge Tacla, Alfredo Ceibal, and especially Liliana Porter, whose combination of real and painted objects on a large white triptych is both fragile and strong. The museum also has a delightful collection of carved Puerto Rican *santos*. Through May 14. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)



Self-portrait of Pat Steir

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—Robert Colescott is one of the few black artists to take on the mainstream (white) art world successfully. His parodies of art history, in which he interprets landmark paintings by substituting black figures for white ones, are acerbic and entertaining attacks on racism and sexism. This is a powerful show. Through April 16. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—The role of the newly free press in the French Revolution is explored in an exhibit of pamphlets, books, broadsides, playing cards, and an eighteenth-century printing press, along with a working press of similar design manned (from 2 to 3 Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays) by printers turning out bilingual copies of "The Declaration of the Rights of Man." Through April 29. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open weekdays, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"Art as a Verb: The Evolving Continuum," a show held jointly by the Studio Museum and the Met Life Gallery (24 W. 24th St.), comprises pieces by thirteen contemporary African-American artists mainly interested in video, performance, and installation. Among the artists are Faith Ringgold, Adrian Piper, and Howardena Pindell. Through June 18. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Fritz Bultman (1919-85)—Like many of his peers in the fifties, Bultman delighted in applying paint, mushing it around, and scratching into it. These paintings are exuberant, but don't add significantly to the history of abstraction. Through March 31. (Schlesinger, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St. Open Mondays.)

Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979)—Delaunay rarely strayed from her narrow vocabulary of colorful swirling arcs and circles within circles—and the world is richer for it. From large canvases to small commercial designs, this selection displays her talent successfully, if somewhat haphazardly. The small watercolors, including designs for costumes and advertisements, are gems. Through April 15. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Jean Hélion (1904-87)—A full sampling of watercolors from the thirties which traces the unsung Hélion's transition from Constructivism to Surrealism. Through April 1. (Rachel Adler, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Jasper Johns—An immaculate historical view of all but one of Johns' elusive map paintings. Through March 25. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Joan Miró (1893-1983)—A pleasant, informal assortment of drawings, paintings, sculptures, and ceramics by this master of austere whimsy. Through March 25. (Perls, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

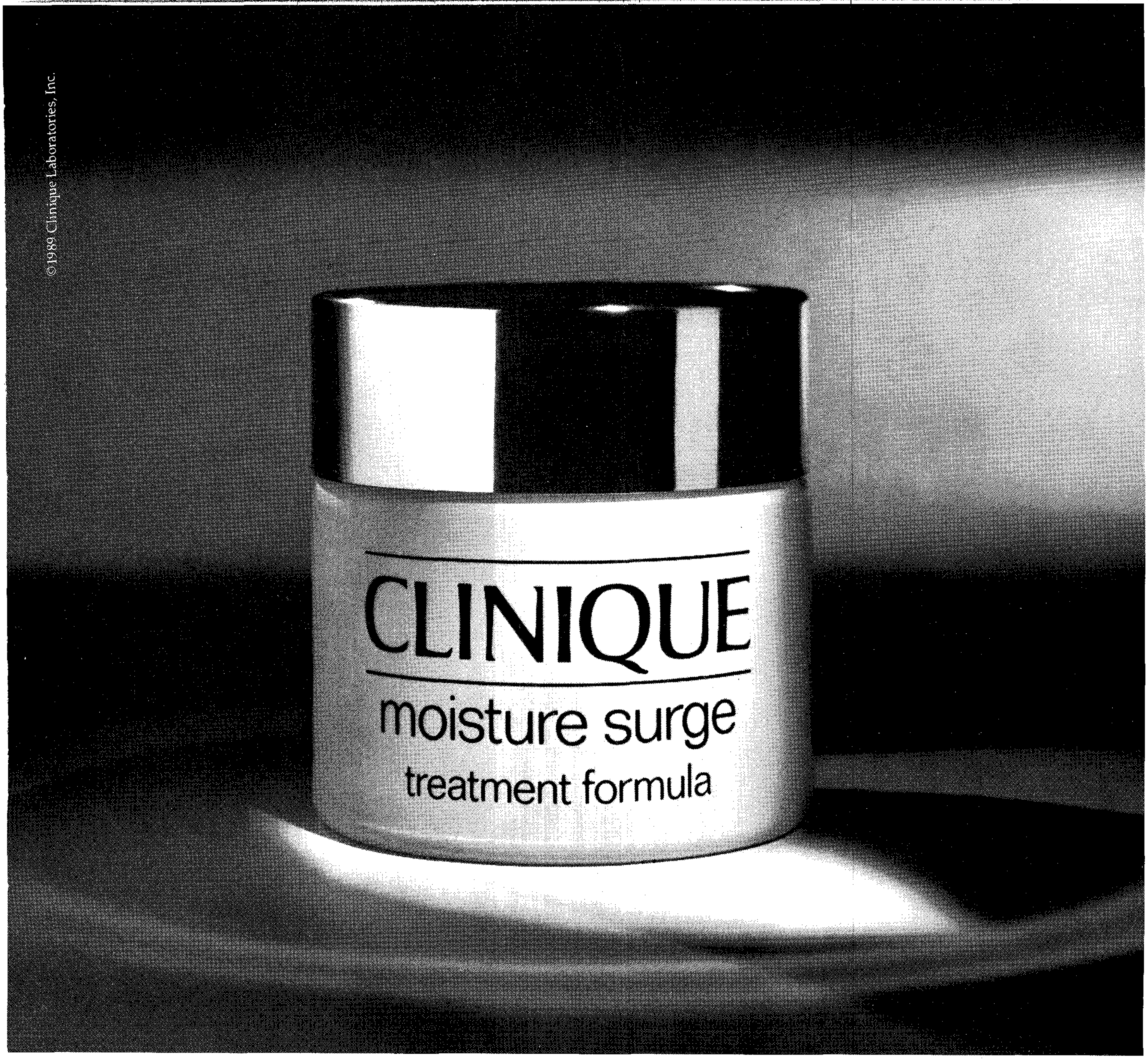
Donald Roller Wilson—In these precise and amusing paintings, Miss Dog America of 1938 and her family of disgruntled chimps, cats, and canines are portrayed in smocked dresses, with watermelon slices or baby bottles on their heads, and pencil stubs and cigarette butts hurtling past them. Through April 1. (Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. Open Mondays.)

Ignacio Zuloaga (1870-1945)—John Singer Sargent admired this Spanish artist, and this show includes a number of charming portraits of proper Bostonians dressed up as *majas* out of Goya. Zuloaga was everything Picasso did not want to be. Through April 28. (Spanish Institute, 684 Park Ave., at 68th St. Open Mondays.)

The Julian Academy—This entertaining, thoughtful salon-style exhibition assembles scores of paintings and drawings and a few sculptures by artists who taught or studied at the famous French art school from 1870 to 1930. Among the standouts are works by Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant, Fernand Khnopff, Emile Bernard, and Louis Michel Eilshemius, and a wonderful study by Henri-Georges Charrier of a rude-looking young male model whose crooked elbow, high on the left, rhymes with an offhand sketch of Paul Gauguin's profile. Through May 13. (Shepherd, 21 E. 84th St.)

"Mayakovsky and the Book"—This display of books by the great Russian Futurist poet Mayakovsky includes some of the century's most brilliant experiments with typography—designed in the teens and twenties by Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Stepanova, and many others—as well as pamphlets for the proletariat. Through March 25. (MJS Books & Graphics, 9 E. 82nd St. Opens at noon.)

Group Shows—At the **Americas Society,** Park Ave. at 68th St.: "New Image Painting: Argentina in the Eighties" offers works by Rafael Bueno, Alfredo Prior, and Guillermo Kuitca. All three have a rather insipid, brushy and breathy touch, but Kuitca's more



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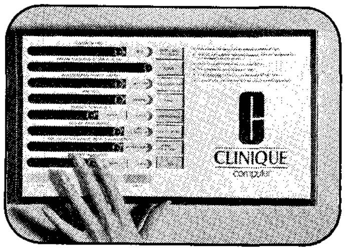

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lurid cast of mind inhibits sleep. Through April 16. (Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.) . . . **HIRSCHL & ADLER MODERN,** 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.: Titled "Repetition," this show sometimes looks as if anybody who ever did anything twice, in any medium, were included. However, it does include some first-rate sixties pieces by Beuys, Polke, and Warhol, and good recent work by artists as disparate as Donald Baechler, Joe Zucker, and the devilish Wolfgang Staehle. Through March 25. (Open Mondays.) . . . **SALANDER-O'REILLY,** 22 E. 80th St.: Family month at this gallery celebrates six generations of the John Constable family. The Constable family Bible and the patriarch's paintbox are far more engaging than the maudlin watercolors of Richard Golding Constable (born 1932) or the eighteen-year-old Sasha Constable's woodcut of slaughtered pigs. Alvara Guevara and his wife, Meraud, continue the family theme, with a charming series of blue paintings of elongated society women and male swimmers (his) and two brown portraits of depressed women and a still-life (hers). His paintings, made in 1916-17, were influenced by Matisse and are uncanny precursors of the figures of Milton Avery. Through March 31. (Open Mondays.) . . . **SCULPTURE CENTER,** 167 E. 69th St.: A show of sculptures by six artists, all women, which is causing a small sensation. Nancy Fried's terra-cotta heads are literal but memorable, and both Deborah Masters and Alison Saar give traditional statuary interesting and flamboyant new twists. But works by Arlene Love, Louise McCagg, and Mary Ann Unger make oppressive demands of us, and the general climate here is psychodramatically overwrought. Through March 25. . . . **VANDERWOUDE TANANBAUM,** 24 E. 81st St.: A sense of style (and a preoccupation with virility) was everything to the sculptors Hunt Diederich, Gaston Lachaise, and Reuben Nakian, according to this delightful display of Art Deco silhouette drawings of bullfighters, women, and bulls, and of sculptures, including Diederich's fire screen of prancing horses nipping each other's tails. Through April 15.

SHORT LIST—**HERBERT FERBER,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through March 23); **ROBERT OHNIGIAN,** Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St. (through April 8); **MARINA STERN,** Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through April 1); **IDELLE WEBER,** Anthony Ralph, 43 E. 78th St. (through April 1).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

ERIK ANDRIESSE—A first one-man show in New York for this younger Dutch artist reveals lurid, empty-headed paintings of flora and fauna which want to create a perverse hot-house atmosphere and manage to suggest the work of Lowell Nesbitt. Through April 8. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN—There's an odd vulnerability to these bristling, monumental sculptures—his newest. Through March 25. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

JOHN DUFF—Recent bronzes. A couple of these quiet, refined, and rather academic floor pieces bear traces of hand modelling. These are the most satisfying. Through April 1. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

CHUCK DUGAN / PETER SAUL—Abstractions bombarded with painterly shapes and with squiggles direct from the tube, in lime green, orange, and fuchsia. The result is a nuclear-age Kandinsky, with a dash of Dubuffet. Through March 31. / Cartoon heroes like Kenny Scharf's, surrealistic creatures like George Condo's, and a fast-footed orange that would be at home in Pee-wee's refrigerator—all these youthful inventions are in drawings made more than two decades ago by Peter Saul, a master of funky figuration. Through April 29. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

JEDD GARET—Recent work in an abstract vein. These paintings mean to convey an artfully lame, stagy, chic kind of world-weariness, and they do, but a lack of energy is nonetheless a big part of their problem. Through March 25. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

AL HELD—Using a variety of perspective systems, Held blasts the picture plane wide open in paintings depicting a complicated architecture of floating and overlapping tunnels, cubes, and latticed girders. His newest are in dark blues, reds, and greens, highlighted with distant passages of light which lend them an air of science fiction. Through March 25. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

WOLF KAHN—New work. Some of these landscapes are quite strange and beautiful, others are conventional and pretty. One gets the sense that Kahn gets a kick out of fence-sitting. Through April 1. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

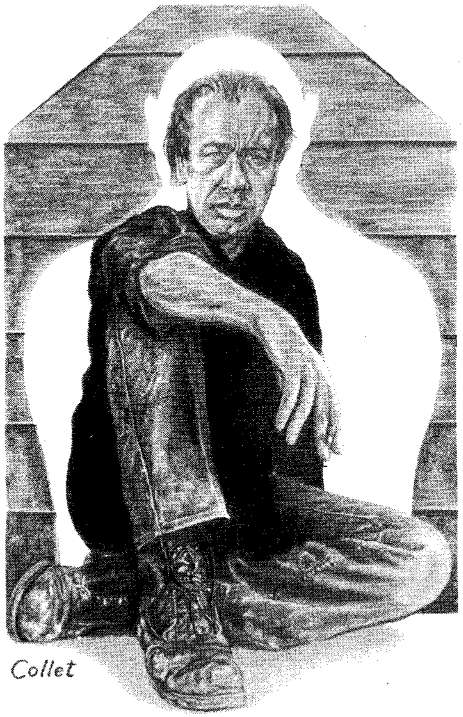
THOMAS SCHÜTTE—This mixed-media installation is a rumination on architecture and, perhaps, the past and future of cities. It includes drawings; several large, stacked constructions out of raw plywood (a now ubiquitous material); and one little male doll that resembles Luke Skywalker. Through April 8. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

ABRAHAM WALKOWITZ (1878-1965)—After visiting Paris in 1906, Walkowitz developed his own Cubo-Futurist style to express his evident delight in the skyscraper grandeur of New York. The drawings and watercolors in this enchanting exhibition have a dynamic and symphonic quality. Through March 25. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

NEIL WELLIVER—Among recent paintings by this predictable master of Down East wilderness is a bittersweet reminder of last Columbus Day's early and misleading mountain snow. Through April 1. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **ASSOCIATED AMERICAN ARTISTS,** 20 W. 57th St.: "Art in Art" is an old-fashioned potpourri of a print exhibition, whose theme, open-armed and unexamined, allows for period pieces by artists such as Peggy Bacon and George Bellows as well as recent work by Christo, Nancy Graves, and Red Grooms. A literary, cartoonish style prevails. Through April 1. . . . **MARISA DEL RE,** 41 E. 57th St.: "Influences" is a great opportunity to see work by some of the best sculptors around. From Tony Cragg's precise arrangement of dirty yellow plastic toys and containers to Jannis Kounellis's steel plates holding rounds of yellow wax and a folded burlap bag, all these pieces share a respect for materials with past lives. Through April 1. . . . **SHEA & BEKER,** 20 W. 57th St.: "Body Fragments" is another theme exhibition that gathers together works by some interesting artists yet fails to set them off or to identify a significant issue. The figurative sculptures on display here—a headless torso, a high-heeled shoe, and a shrivelled skull, to name a few—are downright creepy. Through March 25.

SHORT LIST—**ISABEL BISHOP,** Midtown, 11 E. 57th St. (through March 31); **ROBERT COURTRIGHT,** Gimpel, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through April 1); **DAVID DEWEY,** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. (through March 30); **SIDNEY GOODMAN,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through March 30); **MATTA,** Herstand, 24 W. 57th St., open Mondays (through March 25); **DARRAGH PARK,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through March 25); **CAROLYN PLOCHMANN,** Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St. (through March 25); **GEORGE SEGAL,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St., open Mondays (through April 22); **KIMBER SMITH,** Ross, 50 W. 57th St. (through April 8).



Vito Acconci

GALLERIES—SoHo

VITO ACCONCI—Poking out of the window at Sonnabend (420 West Broadway) is an update of a crazy wooden lunch counter from countercultural days; at Gladstone (99 Greene St.), a group of pastel studies and scale models for a number of projects, by one of the best public artists around. Through March 25.

DONALD BAECHLER—The ostensible subjects of Baechler's work swerve between childhood and dotage, but his technique is sophisticated and mature. His paintings are as dispassionate as Jasper Johns', while some of his drawings suggest a new-age Munch. Paintings at Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St. (through March 25), and drawings at Kasmin, 580 Broadway (through March 23).

JAMES LEE BYARS—Once again, the lights have been dimmed and the walls painted gold for the wacky, beatified Byars, who, wearing a gold lamé suit and a top hat, usually steals the show at his openings. On view this time are a squat cube and a tall cylinder, both of gold-leafed marble. This work is supposed to conjure some kind of divine revelation. Through March 25. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.) . . . ¶ The artist's work can also be seen at Baghoomian, 611 Broadway, through April 15.

COLIN CHASE—There is both humor and poetry to these handwrought sculptures (the artist calls them "spirit catchers") of raw wood combined with actual tree limbs and found materials. Through April 1. (Kelly, 591 Broadway.)

CHUCK CONNELLY—The paint is applied so thickly to these dark narrative canvases that it is sometimes difficult to make out the images of heroic myths and suburbiana. Connelly's is an appealing energy applied to worlds already well explored. Through April 22. (Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway.)

KATE ERICSON AND MEL ZIEGLER—This duo reduces the idea of art as interior decoration to the minimum in two new installations. For instance, they have painted the walls of the Wolff Gallery with colors appropriated from period rooms at the Metropolitan and the Brooklyn Museums. Through April 1. (560 Broadway.)

GUY GOODWIN—Merely competent abstract paintings in an American vein, à la Arthur Dove. The overwhelming smell of hyacinths in the Dolan-Maxwell Gallery on the day we were there seemed an appropriate accompaniment. Through April 8. (154 Wooster St.)

RONI HORN—Small, intense shapes in modulated yellow, deep red, and Yves Klein blue on rectangular surfaces that have been either pieced together from precisely cut paper or incised. They are simply beautiful. Two finely polished copper cones lying on the basement floor of the Gorney Gallery seem to radiate a magnetic force. Through April 1. (100 Greene St.)

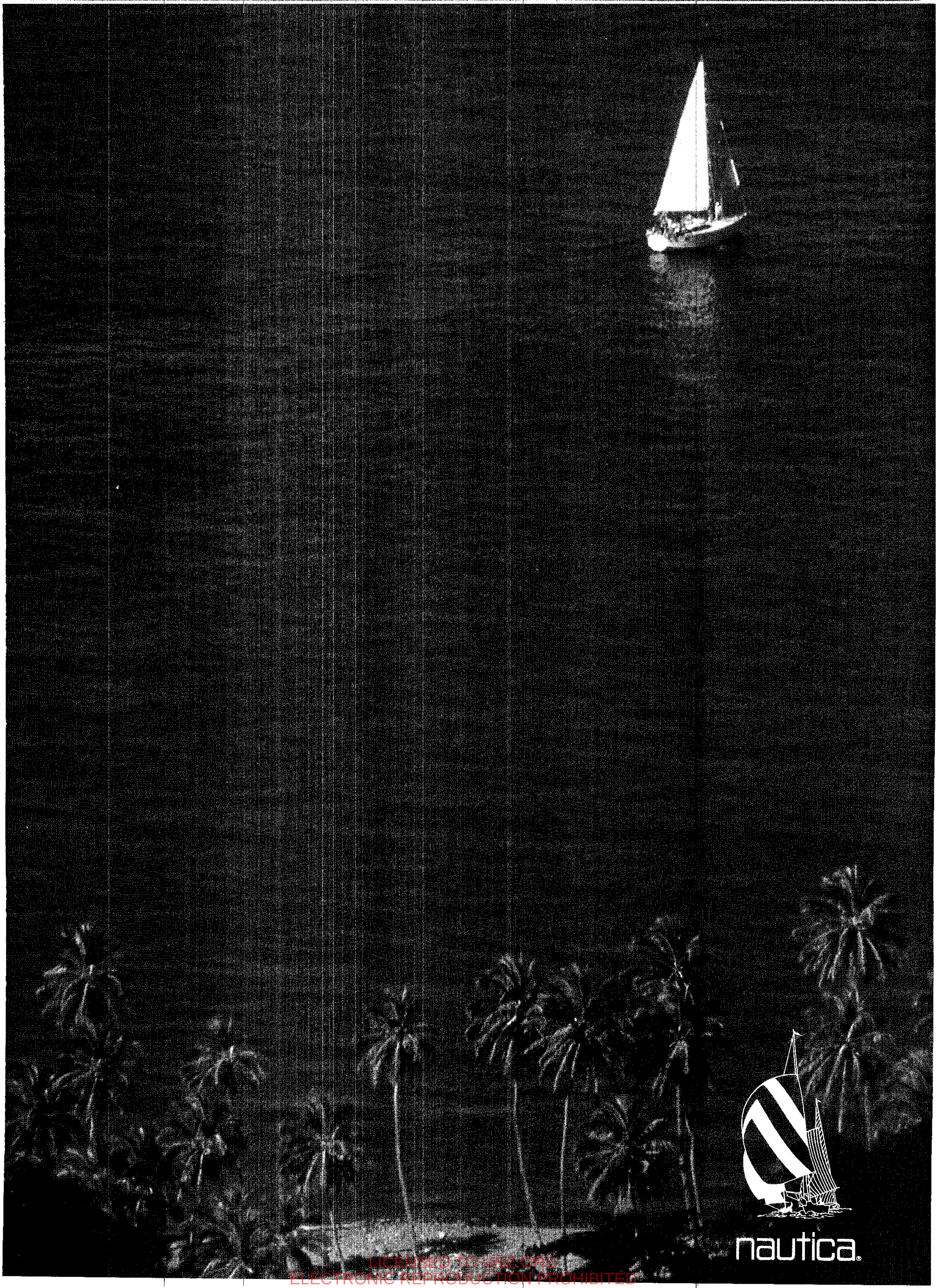
FERENC JADI / BETSY BERNE—Ferenc Jadi is a Hungarian social psychologist who now lives in Berlin, and the figure drawings he exhibits here are superimposed on pages of serious-looking handwriting. / Dark, shiny, semi-abstract mood paintings that seem generic—part of a tidal wave of virtually interchangeable work, probably inspired by Ross Bleckner. Through March 25. (Esman, 70 Greene St.)

RICHARD KALINA—New paintings. These black-and-white still-lifes are uptight but stylish, and look a little as if Oskar Schlemmer had decided to reorganize the work of Matisse. Through April 1. (McDonald, 560 Broadway.)

ADRIAN KELLARD—Profoundly sad carved-and-painted reliefs based on religious and secular images by medieval artisans and by Picasso. They look like German Expressionist woodblocks. Through March 29. (Schreiber-Cutler, 171 Spring St.)

MARIE JO LAFONTAINE—On each of several video monitors embedded in a hulking black spiral, two men circle each other, like suspicious dogs. This Belgian artist's work is accessible, noisy, effective, and crass. Through April 1. (Shainman, 560 Broadway.)

ELIZABETH MURRAY—Few artists express their joy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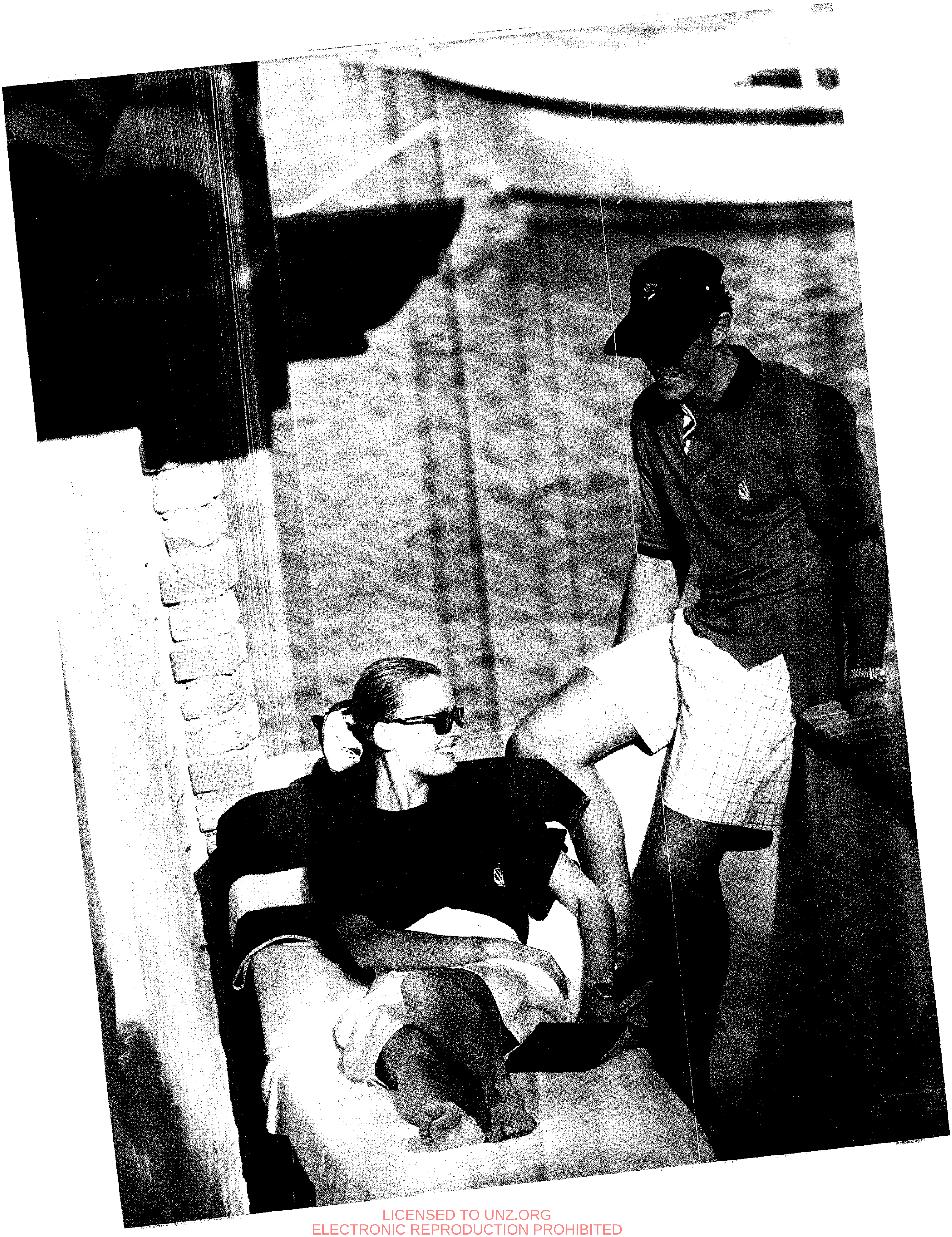

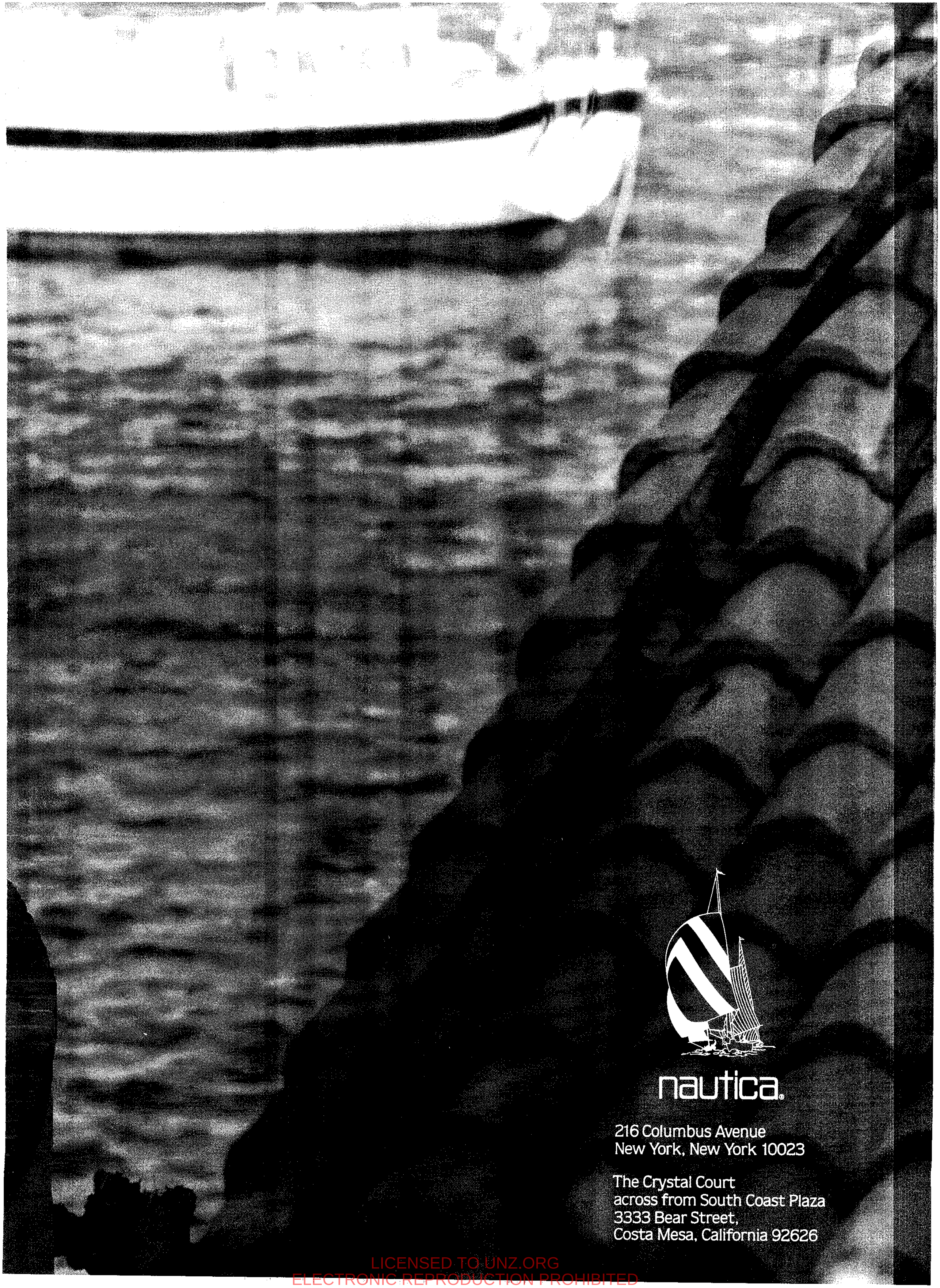

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in painting as exuberantly and consistently as Murray. In her newest work, she uses monstrously bizarre sculptural shapes for canvases. Through March 29. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Roman Opalka—Paintings and photographs in his usual vein. Opalka is now up to 4,293,153, his grounds are pale gray, and he looks older. Through March 25. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Cara Perlman and **Kiki Smith**—A creepy, unsentimental poetry informs Perlman's forest of defoliated concrete trees, with their steel armatures partially exposed, and Smith's delicate ink drawings, some of them on tissue-thin paper, of human anatomy, notably the inside of the mouth and the intestines, and of sperm. Through April 8. (Fawbush, 568 Broadway.)

Emilio Vedova—Paintings from 1982 to 1988. Most are very large and tondo-shaped. Several are freestanding and painted on both sides, in the artist's usual expressionistic grisaille. Through April 1. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

Franz West—The first New York show by this interesting Austrian artist includes paradoxical papier-mâché and steel sculptures, some suggesting derelict chairs, which have a chewed-up and regurgitated look and seem both awkward and nimble, formless and functional. Through March 25. (Koury Wingate, 578 Broadway.)

Helen Miranda Wilson—Sensitive, precise, sky-filled landscapes. Through April 1. (Sorkin, 596 Broadway.)

Thomas Woodruff—These paintings were made in response to the deaths of some of the artist's friends from AIDS and are a noble attempt to have art serve society. (Part of the income from their sale will be donated to research on experimental treatments.) They include dignified depictions of flies, snowmen, geysers, and drive-through redwoods, but are undermined by attempts to force them into a clever "symphonic" structure. In one "movement," for instance, the paintings have transparent curtains attached to the frames. Through April 1. (P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway.)

Michael Zwack—A good-looking show of new *sfumato* paintings by an artist who hasn't been talked about for a while but who was earlier identified with that blurry style. Through April 1. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Group Shows—At the **castelli**, 420 West Broadway: Joseph Kosuth's febrile glass constructions, one with neon, look especially elegant—almost idealized—in this odd gathering, while James Rosenquist's airbrushed paintings, with their exaggerated pinking-sheared motif, get harder and harder to take. Meyer Vaisman, with three big new wall reliefs, continues to evoke homburgs, humidors, and the dirty-old-man comedy routines of early TV. Through March 25. . . . **germans van eck**, 420 West Broadway: Minimal paintings by Harvey Quaytman, Hans Schuil, and Alan Uglow are beautiful and dead, but a sculpture by Donald Lipski in the back room is full of life and play and delight. It consists of many found and fabricated objects—the head of a tennis racquet, a thick turquoise ponytail, a long bent-glass rod—which look like huge butterfly specimens pinned to the wall. Through April 5. . . . **kind**, 136 Greene St.: Working without the benefit of official recognition, the six unofficial Soviet painters in "Behind the Ironic Curtain" are the kind of authentic artists whose existence is questioned in today's market-heady art world. Simon Faibisovich's yellowed crowd scenes painted in a fuzzy Photo-Realistic technique have a dry poignancy. It is not always clear where the irony kicks in. Through April 5.

Short List—**robert bordo**, Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (through April 15); **thom cooney crawford**, M-13, at 72 Greene St. (through April 15); **edward finnegan / robert ackerman**, Thorp, 103 Prince St. (through April 1); **jane hammond**, Exit Art, 578 Broadway (through March 25); **joseph haske**, Davis, 568 Broadway (through April 1); **richard long**, Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St. (through April 15); **matt phillips**, Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through April 8); **arnulf rainer**, Nolan, 560 Broadway (through April 8); **david row**, Good, 532 Broadway (through April 8); **pat steir**, Audiello, 142 Greene St. (through April 15); **mary joan waid**, Einstein, 591 Broadway (through April 8).

OTHER GALLERIES

Grace Graupe-Pillard—Freestanding sculptures, and a wall installation describing a scene of violence with cutout figures. Through April 29. (Bromm, 90 West Broadway.)

Jenny Holzer—A new installation. Through June 18. (Dia Art Foundation, 548 W. 22nd St. Opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays.)

Marian LeConte—Abstract oil paintings with biomorphic shapes which show off a rather heavy-handed and familiar-looking palette-knife technique. Through March 25. (Ceres, 91 Franklin St. Opens at noon.)

Richard Mock—Pieced together from bicycle wheels, sideview mirrors, birdcages, bones, office chairs, and more, these highly ordered assemblages court the spirit of the obsessive but do not win her. Through April 1. (Souyun Yi, 249 Centre St.)

Therese Schwartz—Collage paintings. Through April 16. (Humphrey, 37 E. 7th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

"The Avant-Garde Book"—Symbolism, Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Dada, Constructivism, and Surrealism on the page, plus three early editions of "Tristram Shandy" and a facsimile of Blake's "Book of Urizen." Though short on visual incident, this exhibition is a must for those who believe, in the words of Stéphane Mallarmé, that "the folding of a book/has/an almost religious/significance." Through May 6. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Artists Space—A welcome experimental mood characterizes the installations of "Dark Rooms," including a bed, by Jana Sterbak, piled with pillows with words like "Greed" and "Disease" embroidered on them, and a metal contraption, by Stephen Barry, that spins the adventuresome viewer around, as on a carnival ride. Luis Nicolau's video wall of scenes from the life of Judas, based on early Renaissance paintings and reënacted in super-slo-mo tableaux vivants, is hysterically deadpan. Through April 1. (223 West Broadway.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Robert Mapplethorpe did not go gently into the night. He did not approach the last two years of his life as a "long goodbye" to the world, which is how a recent magazine article presumed to describe the way he was living, infuriating and depressing him. He never said any kind of final goodbye to his friends or family before he died, earlier this month. He hoped to get up and get on with the rest of his life after "this whole awful AIDS thing," as he put it, was over. While he was waiting to feel better, he worked when his health allowed it or when a photograph attracted him so strongly that he had to take it. One such picture was a portrait of the Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop, who went to Mapplethorpe's loft on 23rd Street a few weeks ago to be photographed by him. Mapplethorpe told us that he hid his cigarettes (Kool Ultra Lights) when Koop came over. A friend who was there remembers Mapplethorpe's going a step further and making sure that even a fake cigarette—given to him to discourage his smoking—was removed from sight. This touch of housecleaning will go down in history as one of the rare occasions on which Mapplethorpe hid anything about himself from anyone. (It was a good thing Koop didn't have to come back for his umbrella. Mapplethorpe lit up the minute he left.)

During his last few days, Mapplethorpe didn't have his cameras with him, because he was in the hospital, so he drew in a notebook, filling pages with his signature. Sometimes the signature is part of a larger sketch, sometimes it is the only mark he made on the page. On one page he repeated his signature so profusely that the sheet looks black. He couldn't have made his point clearer: Mapplethorpe was not finished working, he still had hundreds of pictures to do and to sign.

Dianne Blell—The credits to this show of new-age photographs include a hair stylist, a makeup artist, set designers, graphic engineers, and lots of fancy extra-photographic technology. Picasso, de Chirico, Cranach, and other major art-historical figures also contributed to Blell's ambitious project, in which details of their work are put through a complicated process and show up again in new compositions. Despite—or perhaps because of—Blell's emphasis on production, there is something charming and spooky here, and a feeling both prehistoric and futuristic. Through March 25. (Castelli, 578 Broadway.)

Ron English—"How does he do it?" people ask each other, viewing these trompe-l'oeil images. With a camera, a strong sense of composition, a highly developed drawing skill, and an uncomplicated level of wit and pathos. Together these ingredients push superrealism to new reality tests. Through March 25. (O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Walker Evans (1903-75)—Looking at Evans' work is always a pleasure. However, this exhibition feels like an extra pleasure—a homecoming. It includes most of the images in "American Photographs," the 1938 MOMA Evans publication that has now been reissued by the museum. Through April 11. (Museum of Modern Art.)

Susan Hiller—Recent work. Hiller's best new pieces are large color photographs of light patterns projected onto old-fashioned wallpapers with war motifs (boy's-room stuff). They are surprisingly lyrical, and they reminded us of childhood, sleep, Sigmar Polke, and war. Through March 25. (Hearn, 39 Wooster St.)

David McDermott and Peter McGough—This inventive team now brings us its "blue period," a sensational show of all-blue photographs that look as if they were taken in the early days of photography. Although this is the first show of photographs by McDermott and McGough, their understanding of the medium is so fluent that you wouldn't guess it. Through March 25. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-77)—Full of the excitement of a new invention, this exhibition of Talbot's "Pencil of Nature"—the first book ever to include photographs—is the place to go to celebrate the beginning of photography. Talbot's sense of the medium's impact on art, and more generally on how the camera affects the way we see the world, turns out to have been on the button. Through April 9. (Metropolitan Museum.)

International Center of Photography—*Life* photographers' views of the political and cultural events of the nineteen-sixties are documented in a show of two hundred prints. Through May 21. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

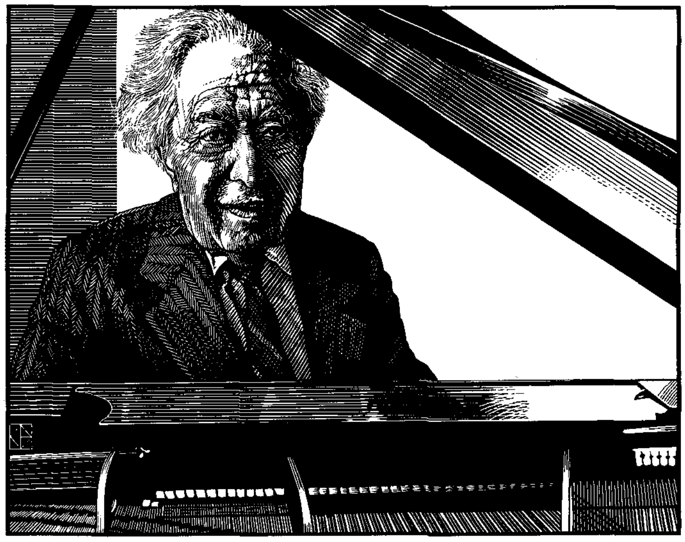
Short List—**manuel alvarez bravo**, Witkin, 415 West Broadway, opens at noon on Saturdays (through April 1); **bill barrette**, Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through April 1); **zeke berman**, Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. (through April 8); **lee friedlander**, Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through April 8); **robert heinecken**, Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St. (through April 22); **ray mortenson**, Borden, 560 Broadway (through March 25); **rosamond wolff purcell**, Pfeifer, 568 Broadway (through April 13); **charles traub and jerry gordon**, Arsenal Gallery, Fifth Ave. at 64th St., closed Saturdays, and the Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St., open daily except Thursdays (through March 31).

MUSIC

Heinz Holliger, the oboist, is a throwback. Not in the sense of using original instruments (he doesn't) or anything like that. But he plays the oboe for a living and yet plays the piano well enough to do it in public, conducts a little, has the wit and technique to compose music, and lives in an artistic world defined by interplay between the classic and the new. In other words, he somewhat resembles the typical well-trained soloist of, say, Mozart's or Schubert's day.

Mr. Holliger has a long-standing relationship with the concert series at the Metropolitan Museum, and he appears there on two consecutive Mondays. Mozart and Schubert come on the 20th, along with Stefan Wolpe; on the 27th, Bach and Antonín Reicha (a contemporary of Beethoven's) are joined to György Ligeti, Sándor Veress, Janáček, and Holliger (a work for wind quintet entitled "h"). On both occasions, Holliger will be accompanied by an ensemble of wind players.

Another tip for woodwind buffs: If you have never heard the sound of the authentic basset horn, you can hear it in triplicate when the New World Basset Horn Trio performs in Merkin Concert Hall's "On Original Instruments" series on the 22nd. The instrument is a kind of low clarinet, smaller and narrower in tone than the familiar bass member of that family. Mozart's affection for the instrument guaranteed it a shadowy continuing life in later composers' scores, like those of Richard Strauss, but it never became a standard member of the orchestra; at Merkin one can judge for oneself whether it should have.



Mieczyslaw Horszowski

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**RIGOLETTO,** with Hei-Kyung Hong, Leo Nucci, and Taro Ichihara; conducted by Nello Santi. (March 20 and March 25 at 8.) . . . With Hei-Kyung Hong, Leo Nucci, and Jerry Hadley; Nello Santi. (March 28 at 8.) . . . **EUGENE ONEGIN,** with Mirella Freni, Jerry Hadley, Jorma Hynninen, and Nicolai Ghiaurov; James Levine. (March 21 at 8, and March 25 at 1:30.) . . . With Mirella Freni, Lenus Carlson, Neil Shicoff, and Hans Sotin; conductor to be announced. (March 29 at 8.) . . . **SALOME,** with Eva Marton, Mignon Dunn, Graham Clark, and Mark W. Baker; Marek Janowski. (March 22 at 8; final performance this season.) . . . **WERTHER,** with Kathleen Kuhlmann, Harolyn Blackwell, Neil Rosenshein, and Bernd Weikl; Jean Fournet. (March 23 at 8; final performance this season.) . . . **DIE WALKÜRE,** with Hildegard Behrens, Jessye Norman, Christa Ludwig, Gary Lakes, and James Morris; James Levine. (March 24 at 7; first performance this season.) . . . **DAS RHEINGOLD,** with Christa Ludwig, Birgitta Svendén, Siegfried Jerusalem, Horst Hiestermann, Hans Sotin, and Ekkehard Wlaschiha; James Levine. (March 27 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

After Dinner Opera Company—Presenting Elizabeth Swados's "Alice in Concert," a musical version of the Lewis Carroll tales. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, 111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St. March 27 at 4. No tickets necessary.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., 570-3949. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. March 21 at 8: Erich Leinsdorf conducting a Brahms-Debussy-Berlioz program, with Maria Ewing, soprano; Lucille Beer, mezzo-soprano; and the New York Choral Artists. . . . ¶ March 23-25 at 8, and March 28 at 7:30: Klaus Tennstedt conducting Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony and Mahler's Fourth Symphony, with Benita Valente, soprano. (With four more performances through April 4.)

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard conducting works by Bach, Mahler, Weber, and Haydn. With William Sharp, baritone, and Steven Dibner, bassoon. (Alice Tully Hall. March 27 at 8.)

Florilegium Chamber Choir—Beginning its six-year-long survey of all Purcell's operas and operettas, starting with "Dido and Aeneas." Directed by JoAnn Rice. (Park Avenue Christian Church, Park Ave. at 85th St. March 22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 627-9141.)

Goodman Chamber Choir—Andrea Goodman directing rarely heard Russian music. With the N.Y.U. Chamber Music Society. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 23 at 3.)

State Academic Male Choir of Estonia—First the Bulgarian women, now this. Olev Oja and Kuno Areng directing. (Carnegie Hall. March 24 at 8.)

Canticum Novum Singers—Harold Rosenbaum directing an all-Bach program. With Edward Brewer, harpsichord, and a small baroque instrumental ensemble. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 25 at 8.)

RECITALS

"Chamber Music for Winds"—A small group assembled by Heinz Holliger, who will play the oboe. (Metropolitan Museum. March 20 and March 27 at 8.)

Michala Petri—Recorder, with Hanne Petri, harpsichord. (Metropolitan Museum. March 22 at 8.)

On Original Instruments Chamber Ensemble—With the New World Basset Horn Trio, playing a concert of works by Mozart and Beethoven. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 22 at 8.)

Speculum Musicae—Playing music by young American composers. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. March 22 at 8.)

Michael Newman and Laura Oltman—Classical guitarists, with Ruth Waterman, violin. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. March 22 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Juilliard String Quartet—Playing Beethoven, Hindemith, and Verdi. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. March 22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-7515.)

Andrew Bolotowski—Flute, with Robert Shaughnessy, classical guitarist. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. 242-4770. March 23 at 8.)

Composers String Quartet—In works by Elliott Carter and Milton Babbitt. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. March 23 at 8.)

Joseph Swensen and Jeffrey Kahane—Violin and piano, in an all-Schubert program. (Metropolitan Museum. March 23 at 8.). . . . ¶ Playing music by Mozart, Bartók, Schubert, and others. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. March 25 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

American String Quartet—Playing two quartets by Beethoven. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. March 23 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Mieczyslaw Horszowski—A pianist with a cult following. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. March 25 at 8.)

Waverly Consort—Playing a second performance of "The Seven Last Words of Christ." (Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park. 923-3700. March 26 at 3.)

Edmund Niemann and Nurit Tilles—Duo piano, in a program that includes a new work by David Lang and one by Larry Lockwood. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. March 27 at 8.)

Manhattan Marimba Quartet—Playing medieval and Renaissance works. With guest artist Ben Harms. (Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. March 28 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Guild of Composers—With the New Calliope Singers. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. March 28 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New York Camerata—In a program that includes the première of Michael White's "El Poeta Canta," five songs based on poems by García Lorca. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. March 28 at 8.)

Alan Feinberg—Piano, performing classical and contemporary works. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. March 29 at 8.)

Parnassus—Anthony Korf conducting, among other works, a new piece by Victor Ialeggio. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broad-

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THEY DON'T DO WINDOWS

The mob does such a fine job of keeping crime off the streets of the South Village that it seems almost ungrateful to carp about their dirty windows. However, it's been months since the Times *reported on certain shady characters frequenting the funky storefront known as the Triangle Civic Improvement Association (208 Sullivan St.), and though the reporter pointed out the suspiciously filmy windows, the grime looks worse than ever. Clearly, cleanliness isn't next to godfatherliness.*

Come on, gents! Get out the Windex! Scrub-a-dub-dub! Hasn't anyone been to the movies lately? Organized crime has a new image to live up to—upscale underworld. Try some nice Levolor blinds. If you want to recapture some of that old clandestine thrill, you can always pull them shut. But face it: worse plots are hatched on Wall Street these days without so much as an office partition.

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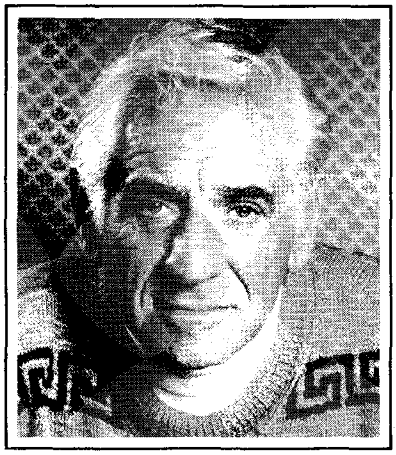

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way at 116th St. 854-7799. March 29 at 8.)

Gerald Robbins—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 29 at 8.)

JAZZ / ROCK / POP / PERSONAL APPEARANCES

The Bangles—This picture-perfect L.A. pop band broke onto the scene in the early eighties with a single called "Going Down to Liverpool," and, in case anyone missed the reference, singer-guitarist Susanna Hoffs bopped around stage with a black-and-white John Lennon-style Rickenbacker. The group's four-part harmonies, however, sound a lot more like Fleetwood Mac than like their Fab Forebears. While the Bangles have made spirited hits out of other people's songs—Prince's "Manic Monday" and a cocaine-era cover of Paul Simon's "Hazy Shade of Winter"—their own music has sometimes fallen short. Still, if you're looking for a chorus of "ahs," no one else lays it on quite this thick. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. March 23 at 8. . . . ¶ Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. 947-5850. March 24 at 8.)

De La Soul—Three hip-hoppers from Amityville (named Posdnuos, P. A. Pasemaster Mase, and Trugoy the Dove) who rap with a laid-back, unfettered whimsy about de la daisies, de la animals, and de la beautiful girls. Their songs, mixed with snippets from first-year-French tapes and old Steely Dan tunes, are indisputably funky and will leave audiences giggling and jiggling. On a double bill with Slick Rick, whose raps and attitude seem very harsh in comparison. (Beacon Theatre. March 24 at 8.)

Wynton Marsalis—The twenty-seven-year-old trumpeter, from an illustrious family of New Orleans musicians, returns to the Joyce Theatre for a six-night engagement. (He last played here in November, 1986.) Over the past six years, Marsalis has racked up a princely collection of Grammy Awards for his jazz and classical recordings. With a sextet here, he focusses on jazz. (175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. March 28-29 at 8. Through April 2.)

Bananarama—Palladium. March 25 at 8.

Shalom Hanoch—A popular Israeli rock singer. (Beacon Theatre. March 25 at 8:30, and March 26 at 8.)

Nik Munson, Barbara Lea, and Daryl Sherman—Songs from the Second World War. (Vineyard Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 683-0696. March 26 at 3 and 7.)

Ehud Banai and the Refugees—With Local Music. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. March 27-28 at 8.)

Jalalu K. Nelson—La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. March 27 at 9.

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Knicks—Vs. the Atlanta Hawks, March 25. . . . ¶ Vs. the Portland Trail Blazers, March 28. (Game time: 8:30.)

Nets—Vs. the Indiana Pacers, March 21. . . . ¶ Vs. the Atlanta Hawks, March 28. (Game time: 7:30.)

Rangers—Seventeen years ago, in the Stanley Cup finals, Eddie Giacomin was wearing his famous jersey. Now the jersey's hanging from the rafters, and the Rangers are headed for the April 5 playoffs. Vs. the St. Louis Blues, March 20. . . . ¶ Vs. the Minnesota North Stars, March 22. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, March 26. (Game time: 7:30.)

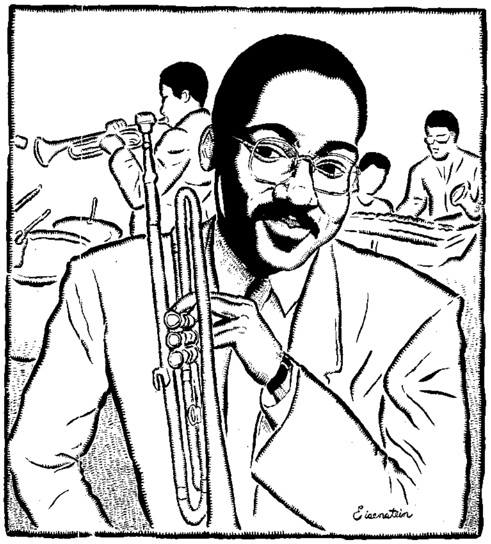
Islanders—Vs. the Minnesota North Stars, March 23. . . . ¶ Vs. the Washington Capitals, March 28. (Game time: 8:05.)

Devils—Vs. the Vancouver Canucks, March 20. . . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, March 27. . . . ¶ Vs. the Islanders, March 29. (Game time: 7:45.)

(Home base for the Rangers and the Knicks is Madison Square Garden, 563-8300; for the Islanders, Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 587-9222; and for the Devils and the Nets, Byrne Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except March 26, at 1. On March 25, in the Bay Shore Stakes, D. Wayne Lukas unveils his latest Derby contender, Houston. . . . ¶ Trotting at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.



Wynton Marsalis

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Easter-Egg Roll—A race in which children between five and thirteen use spoons to push wooden eggs across the south end of Central Park's Great Lawn. Ceremonial face-painting, from 10 to 11, is optional, but kids should arrive at 11:30 to register. (Mid-Park at 81st St. March 25.)

Can Can—Two support groups for the homeless, WE CAN and the Parks Department's Homeless Youth Recreation Program, want your empties. On March 25, between 10 and 4, deposit containers—no glass, please—will be accepted at a receptacle on the corner of Central Park West and 72nd St. (Your containers are always welcome at WE CAN's headquarters, at 520 W. 43rd St., between 10th and 11th. WE CAN is open Mondays through Fridays, 8 to 3.)

Medallic Art—In Eastern Europe, where governments often look askance at experimental art work, artists and collectors have established a sort of underground market for medallic art. A selection of these medallions are part of a show at the American Numismatic Society which features about two hundred contemporary medallic artists from twenty-one countries. The majority of the works are in bronze, with a few in copper, glass, and stone. Through April 1. (Broadway at 155th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9 to 4:30; Sundays, 1 to 4:30.)

Tennessee Williams—A collection of set-design sketches, first editions, and correspondence. Also included are the manuscripts of "The Glass Menagerie," "A Streetcar Named Desire," and "Mes Cahiers Noirs"—an unpublished autobiographical sketch in which Williams vents a little steam at his friends and critics. Through July 26. (Butler Library, Columbia University, Broadway at 115th St. Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 4:45.)

James Levine—The conductor, who this year is leading Wagner's Ring Cycle at the Metropolitan Opera House, sets aside his baton for an informal talk. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, 111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St. March 23 at 5:30. For tickets, call 874-6770.)

Readings—Harold Brodkey, Fran Lebowitz, and Sharon Olds will read their fiction, essays, and poems, respectively, in a benefit for the magazine *Columbia*. (West Side Y, 5 W. 63rd St. 787-6557. March 23 at 8.) . . . ¶ John Hollander and Julia Randall will read their poetry. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. March 23 at 8. For information about tickets, call 645-5848.) . . . ¶ Maxine Kumin and Dahlia Ravikovitch reading their poetry. Miss Ravikovitch will read in Hebrew, with English translations by Chana Bloch. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. March 27 at 8:15.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 27.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
March 21-22: At 7, "A Very Moral Night" (1977, directed by Karoly Makk; in Hungarian); and, at 9:30, "The House Under the Rocks" (1958, Makk; in Hungarian).
March 23-24: At 7, "A Very Moral Night"; and, at 9:30, "Cat's Play" (1974, Makk; in Hungarian).
March 25: "The Singing Detective" (Jon Amiel), with Michael Gambon. The six-and-a-half hour British television series, shown complete at one sitting, with an intermission.
March 26: At 2, "Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie" (Marcel Ophuls; in English, French, German, and Spanish), a four-hour-and-twenty-seven-minute documentary; at 7, "A Very Moral Night"; and, at 9:30, "Love" (1971, Makk; in Hungarian).
March 28: At 7, "A Very Moral Night"; and, at 9:30, "Love."
From March 29: At 7, "A Very Moral Night"; and, at 9:30, "Another Way" (1981, Makk; in Hungarian).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Chances Are" (Emile Ardolino), with Cybill Shepherd and Robert Downey, Jr.
Theatre 2: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).
Theatre 3: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"New York Stories" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Fletch Lives" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Through March 23: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.
From March 24: "Dead-Bang" (John Frankenheimer), with Don Johnson.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Leviathan" (George Cosmatos), with Peter Weller, Richard Crenna, and Amanda Pays.
Theatre 2: "Mississippi Burning" (†).
Theatre 3: "Rain Man" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Working Girl" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure" (Stephen Herek), with Keanu Reeves.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Beaches" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Jacknife" (David Jones), with Robert De Niro, Ed Harris, and Kathy Baker.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Rooftops" (Robert Wise), with Jason Gedrick.
Theatre 2: "Fletch Lives" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through March 21: "Working Girl" (†). From March 22: "True Believer" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (Terry Gilliam), with John Neville, Eric Idle, Sarah Polley, Oliver Reed, Uma Thurman, and Jonathan Pryce.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Slaves of New York" (James Ivory), with Bernadette Peters and Chris Sarandon.
Theatre 2: "New York Stories" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through March 23: "Police Academy 6: City Under Siege" (Peter Bonerz), with Bubba Smith. From March 24: "Dead-Bang" (John Frankenheimer), with Don Johnson.
Theatre 2: "Chances Are" (Emile Ardolino), with Cybill Shepherd and Robert Downey, Jr.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through March 21: "True Believer" (†).
From March 22: "Troop Beverly Hills" (Jeff Kanew), with Shelley Long and Craig T. Nelson.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Cousins" (†).
Theatre 2: "Rain Man" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Mississippi Burning" (†).

U.A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Fletch Lives" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: Through March 23: "Police Academy 6: City Under Siege" (Peter Bonerz), with Bubba Smith. From March 24 (tentative): "Dead-Bang" (John Frankenheimer), with Don Johnson.
Theatre 2: "Leviathan" (George Cosmatos), with Peter Weller, Richard Crenna, and Amanda Pays.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "The Rescuers" (1977), a full-length animated film; and (evenings only) "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)
Through March 21: "Lightning Over Braddock: A Rustbowl Fantasy" (†).
From March 22: "Lodz Ghetto" (directed by Kathryn Taverna and Alan Adelson).

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "Under the Sun of Satan" (Maurice Pialat; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Sandrine Bonnaire.
Theatre 2: Through March 23: "Wings of Desire" (Wim Wenders; in German), with Bruno Ganz, Otto Sander, and Solveig Dommartin. From March 24: (Separate admissions) "Wings of Desire"; and "Exquisite Corpses" (Temistocles Lopez).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 2: "Rooftops" (Robert Wise), with Jason Gedrick.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
Through March 23: "Out Cold" (†).
From March 24: "Dead-Bang" (John Frankenheimer), with Don Johnson.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Fletch Lives" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase.
Theatre 2: Through March 21: "True Believer" (†). From March 22: "Troop Beverly Hills" (Jeff Kanew), with Shelley Long and Craig T. Nelson.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Salaam Bombay!" (Mira Nair; in Hindi).
Theatre 2: "The Dressmaker" (†).
Theatre 3: "Tapeheads" (Bill Fishman), with John Cusack and Tim Robbins.
Theatre 4: Through March 23: "Tapeheads." From March 24: "In a Glass Cage" (Agustin Villaronga; in Spanish).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through March 23: "Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter. From March 24: "Jacknife" (David Jones), with Robert De Niro, Ed Harris, and Kathy Baker.
Theatre 2: Through March 21: "True Believer" (†). From March 22: "Troop Beverly Hills" (Jeff Kanew), with Shelley Long and Craig T. Nelson.
Theatre 3: "Rooftops" (Robert Wise), with Jason Gedrick.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"New York Stories" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Lawrence of Arabia" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through March 23: "Echoes of Paradise" (Phillip Noyce), with Wendy Hughes and John Lone.
From March 24: "Powwow Highway" (Jonathan Wacks), with A Martinez.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Through March 21: "Paperhouse" (Bernard Rose), with Charlotte Burke, Ben Cross, and Glenne Headly.
From March 22: "84 Charlie Mopic" (Patrick Duncan).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
Through March 21: "The Luckiest Man in the World" (Frank D. Gilroy), with Philip Bosco.
From March 22: "True Believer" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Hanussen" (István Szabó; in Hungarian), with Klaus Maria Brandauer and Erland Josephson.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
March 20: "The Mighty Quinn" (Carl Schenkel), with Denzel Washington and Robert Townsend.
March 21: Theatre closed.
From March 22: "Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.

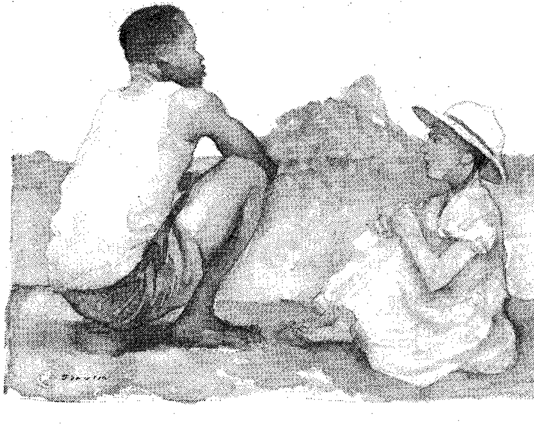
Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Rain Man" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Pelle the Conqueror" (†).
Theatre 2: "High Hopes" (†).
Theatre 3: "Murmur of the Heart" (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).
Theatre 2: "Chocolat" (Claire Denis; in French).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Fletch Lives" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "New York Stories" (†).
Theatre 2: "Leviathan" (George Cosmatos), with Peter Weller, Richard Crenna, and Amanda Pays.
Theatre 3: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.



Isaach de Bankolé and Cécile Ducasse in "Chocolat"

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Theatre 4: "Chances Are" (Emile Ardolino), with Cybill Shepherd and Robert Downey, Jr.
Theatre 5: Through March 23: "Police Academy 6: City Under Siege" (Peter Bonerz), with Bubba Smith. From March 24 (tentative): "Dead-Bang" (John Frankenheimer), with Don Johnson.
Theatre 6: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Rooftops" (Robert Wise), with Jason Gedrick.
Theatre 2: "Working Girl" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through March 21: "True Believer" (†). From March 22: "Troop Beverly Hills" (Jeff Kanew), with Shelley Long and Craig T. Nelson.
Theatre 2: "Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: Through March 23: "Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure" (directed by *Stephen Herek), with Keanu Reeves. From* March 24: "Dead-Bang" (John Frankenheimer), with Don Johnson.
Theatre 2: "Tap" (†).
Theatre 3: "Skin Deep" (Blake Edwards), with John Ritter.
Theatre 4: Through March 23: "Working Girl" (†). From March 24: "976-Evil" (Robert Englund).
Theatre 5: "Police Academy 6: City Under Siege" (Peter Bonerz), with Bubba Smith.
Theatre 6: "Chances Are" (Emile Ardolino), with Cybill Shepherd and Robert Downey, Jr.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"The Mighty Quinn" (Carl Schenkel), with Denzel Washington and Robert Townsend.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Beaches" (†).
Theatre 3: "Three Fugitives" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Rescuers" (1977), a full-length animated film.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Leviathan" (George Cosmatos), with Peter Weller, Richard Crenna, and Amanda Pays.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
Through March 23: "The Fly II" (Chris Walas), with Eric Stoltz.
From March 24: "Jacknife" (David Jones), with Robert De Niro, Ed Harris, and Kathy Baker.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Fletch Lives" (Michael Ritchie), with Chevy Chase.
Theatre 2: "Rooftops" (Robert Wise), with Jason Gedrick.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
Through March 21: "Mississippi Burning" (†).
From March 22: "Troop Beverly Hills" (Jeff Kanew), with Shelley Long and Craig T. Nelson.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Lean on Me" (John G. Avildsen), with Morgan Freeman.
Theatre 2: "Lean on Me."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through March 25: "Gone with the Wind" (1939, directed by Victor Fleming), with Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable.
March 26-27: "The Old Maid" (†); and "The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex" (1939, Michael Curtiz), with Bette Davis and Errol Flynn.
March 28: "Zaza" *(†); and "The Light That* Failed" (1940, William Wellman), with Ida Lupino, Ronald Colman, and Walter Huston.
From March 29: "Honolulu" (1939, Eddie Buzzell), with Eleanor Powell, Robert Young, and Burns and Allen; and "Second Fiddle" (1939, Sidney Lanfield), with Sonja Henie and Tyrone Power.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through March 21: "A World Apart" (1988, Chris Menges), with Barbara Hershey, Jodhi May, and Linda Mvusi; and "Circle of Deceit" (1982, Volker Schlöndorff; in German), with Bruno Ganz and Hanna Schygulla.
March 22-23: "Queen of Outer Space" (1958, Edward Bernds), with Zsa Zsa Gabor and Eric Fleming; and "Attack of the 50-Foot Woman" (1958, Nathan Hertz), with Allison Hayes and William Hudson.
March 24-25: "Andy Warhol's Frankenstein" (1974) and "Andy Warhol's Dracula" (1975), both directed by Paul Morrissey, with Joe Dallesandro.
March 26: "Breathless" (1959, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and "Band of Outsiders" (1964, Godard; in French), with Anna Karina and Sami Frey.
March 27-28: "Veronika Voss" (1982, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Rosel Zech; and "Lola" (1982, Fassbinder; in German).
From March 29: "Touch of Evil" (1958, Orson Welles), with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh; and "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948, Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)
March 21: "In a Year of 13 Moons" (1978, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Volker Spengler; and "The Third Generation" (1979, Fassbinder; in German), with Eddie Constantine and Hanna Schygulla.
March 22-23: "The Marriage of Maria Braun" (1979, Fassbinder; in German), with Hanna Schygulla; and "The Wizard of Babylon" (1983, Dieter Schidor; in German), a documentary on the filming of Fassbinder's "Querelle."
March 24-27: "Marius" (†) and "Fanny" (1932 †).
March 28-29: "Angèle" (1934, Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Fernandel, Orane Démazis, and Jean Servais.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
March 20: "The More the Merrier" (1943, George Stevens), with Jean Arthur, Joel McCrea, and Charles Coburn; and "Walk, Don't Run" (1966, Charles Walters), with Cary Grant, Samantha Eggar, and Jim Hutton.
March 21: "Crime in the Streets" (1956, *Donald Siegel), with James Whitmore,* John Cassavetes, and Sal Mineo; and "Crime and Punishment, U.S.A." (1959, Denis Sanders), with George Hamilton, Frank Silvera, and Mary Murphy.
March 22: "Imitation of Life" (1959, Douglas Sirk), with Lana Turner, John Gavin, Sandra Dee, Juanita Moore, and Susan Kohner; and "Autumn Leaves" (1956, Robert Aldrich), with Joan Crawford, Cliff Robertson, Vera Miles, and Lorne Greene.
March 23: "School Daze" (1988, Spike Lee); and "Cooley High" (1975, Michael Schultz), with Glynn Turman and Lawrence-Hilton Jacobs.
March 24-25: "The Damned" (†); and "Death in Venice" (1971, Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde and Bjorn Andresen.
March 26: "A Nos Amours" (1984, Maurice Pialat; in French); and "Heat of Desire" (1980, Luc Béraud; in French), with Patrick Dewaere.
March 27: "Jeanne Eagels" (1957, George Sidney), with Kim Novak, Jeff Chandler, Agnes Moorehead, and Charles Drake; and "Pushover" (1954, Richard Quine), with Fred MacMurray, Phil Carey, Kim Novak, Dorothy Malone, and E. G. Marshall.
March 28: "The Dark Past" (1948, Rudolph Maté), with William Holden, Nina Foch, Lee J. Cobb, and Adele Jergens; and "Shockproof" (1949, Douglas Sirk), with Cornel Wilde and Patricia Knight.
March 29: "Madame X" (1966 †); and "Love Has Many Faces" (1965, Alexander Singer), with Lana Turner, Cliff Robertson, and Hugh O'Brian.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
March 20: "The Soft Skin" (1964, François Truffaut; in French), with Jean Desailly, Françoise Dorléac, and Nelly Benedetti; and "Two English Girls" (1972, Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud.
March 21: "In a Lonely Place" (1950, Nicholas Ray), with Humphrey Bogart and Gloria Grahame; and "Dead Reckoning" (1947, John Cromwell), with Humphrey Bogart and Lizabeth Scott.
March 22: "Twelve Angry Men" (1957, Sidney Lumet), with Henry Fonda, Lee J. Cobb, and Jack Warden; and "Witness for the Prosecution" (1958, Billy Wilder), with Tyrone Power, Marlene Dietrich, Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, and Una O'Connor.

March 23: "Lost Horizon" (1937, Frank Capra), with Ronald Colman, Margo, Sam Jaffe, and Edward Everett Horton; and "The Bitter Tea of General Yen" (†).

March 24-25: "East of Eden" (†); and "Rebel Without a Cause" (1955, Nicholas Ray), with James Dean, Natalie Wood, Sal Mineo, Corey Allen, and Nick Adams.

March 26: "The Gospel According to St. Matthew" (1966, Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian), with a cast of nonprofessionals; and "Nazarin" (†).

March 27: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (†); and "Muriel" (1963, Alain Resnais; in French), with Delphine Seyrig.

March 28: "Dark Passage" (†); and "To Have and Have Not" (1944, Howard Hawks), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Walter Brennan.

March 29: "The Devil Is a Woman" (1935, Josef von Sternberg), with Marlene Dietrich, Lionel Atwill, and Cesar Romero; and "Dishonored" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (at MOMA)—An international festival of new films by new directors. March 20 at 6: "A Strange Place to Meet" (François Dupeyron). . . . ¶ March 20 at 8:30: "The Money Juggler" (Leo Rubinfien) and "Coming Out" (Susan Bell and Ted Reed). . . . ¶ March 21 at 6: "A One Way Ticket" (Agilberto Meléndez). . . . ¶ March 21 at 8:30 and March 22 at 6: "Whooping Cough" (Péter Gárdos). . . . ¶ March 22 at 9: "A One Way Ticket." . . ¶ March 23 at 6: "Romance" (Sergio Bianchi). . . . ¶ March 23 at 9: "Komitas" (Don Askarian). . . . ¶ March 24 at 6: "Summer Vacation: 1999" (Shusuke Kaneko). . . . ¶ March 24 at 8:30: "Let's Get Lost" (Bruce Weber). . . . ¶ March 25 at 1: "Komitas." . . . ¶ March 25 at 3:30: "Let's Get Lost." . . . ¶ March 25 at 6:30: "Mr. Universe" (György Szomjas). . . . ¶ March 25 at 9 and March 26 at 1: "Morgan's Cake" (Rick Schmidt). . . . ¶ March 26 at 3:30: "Summer Vacation: 1999." . . ¶ March 26 at 6: "The Peddler" (Mohsen Makhmalbaf). . . . ¶ March 26 at 8:30: "Romance." . . ¶ March 27 at 6: "The Peddler." . . ¶ March 27 at 8:30: "Mr. Universe." . . . ¶ March 28 at 6: "Evening Bell" (Wu Ziniu). . . . ¶ March 28 at 8:30 and March 29 at 6: "Foxtrot" (Jon Tryggvason). . . . ¶ March 29 at 8:30: "Evening Bell." (Roy and Niuta Titus Theatre 1, 11 W. 53rd St. For information, call 708-9500.)

American Museum of the Moving Image, 36th St. at 35th Ave., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"A Second Look," films that opened in 1988 but had only limited runs. March 22 at 2:30: "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done" (Anthony Thomas), a documentary. . . . ¶ March 23 at 2:30: "Patty Hearst" (Paul Schrader), with Natasha Richardson. . . . ¶ March 24 at 2:30: "King Lear" (Jean-Luc Godard), with Burgess Meredith, Molly Ringwald, and Godard. . . . ¶ March 24 at 7:30: "Anguish" (Bigas Luna), with Zelda Rubinstein. . . . ¶ March 25 at 1: "Five Corners" (Tony Bill), with Jodie Foster. . . . ¶ March 25 at 4: "Shy People" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jill Clayburgh and Barbara Hershey. . . . ¶ March 25 at 7:30 and March 26 at 1: "Candy Mountain" (Robert Frank and Rudy Wurlitzer), with Kevin J. O'Connor . . . . ¶ March 26 at 3:30: "Five Corners." . . . ¶ March 29 at 2:30: "Shy People."

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—March 21 at 8: A hundred and thirty very short films (1896-1905) by Louis and Auguste Lumière. . . . ¶ March 22 at 6: "Time in the Sun" (1933, Sergei Eisenstein; edited by Marie Seton in 1939), with Seton. . . . ¶ March 22 at 8: "Film Portrait" (1971, Jerome Hill). . . . ¶ March 23 at 7: Five short films by Larry Jordan. . . . ¶ March 23 at 8:30: "Salt of the Earth" (1954, Herbert Biberman). . . . ¶ March 24 at 7: "Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son" (1969, Ken Jacobs). . . . ¶ March 24 at 9: "Anita, Dances of Vice" (1987, Rosa von Praunheim). . . . ¶ March 28 at 8: Seven short 1974 films by Stan Brakhage. . . . ¶ March 29 at 8: Five recent Soviet documentaries.

Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2111)—March 20 at 8: "Les Carabiniers" (1963, Jean-Luc Godard; in French). . . . ¶ March 21 at 8: Short silent Surrealist films by René Clair, Marcel Duchamp, Luis Buñuel, Salvador Dali, and Man Ray. . . . ¶ March 22 at 8: "The Last Supper" (1977, Tomás Gutiérrez Alea; a Cuban film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ March 23 at 8: Films by members of the West German group Alte Kinder. . . . ¶ March 24 at 8: "Cooperation of Parts" (1987), by Dan Eisenberg, who will be present. . . . ¶ March 25 at 8: "The Devil's Cleavage" (1975, George Kuchar). . . . ¶ March 26 at 8: Short films by Gary McLaren, Steve Anker, Susie Klein, Lauri Nagel, and Ann Farmer and Joan Blair. . . . ¶ March 27 at 8: "Le Petit Soldat" (1960, Godard; in French). . . . ¶ March 28 at 8: Short silent films by Louis and Auguste Lumière and others. . . . ¶ March 29 at 8: "Up to a Certain Point" (1984, Alea; a Cuban film, in Spanish).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—March 24 at 6:30 and 8:20: "Thirst for Love" (1967, Koreyoshi Kurahara; in Japanese), with Ruriko Asaoka; based on the novel by Yukio Mishima.

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—Films by women of Soviet Central Asia. March 24 at 3: "The Veil" and "Dignity or the Secret of the Smile," both documentaries by Ruzika Mergenbaeva. . . . ¶ March 24 at 7: "My Home on Green Hills" (Asya Suleyeva); and an animated short, "Golden Leaf" (Juli Augmonova).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—The film section of "Yoko Ono: Objects, Films" is showing in the Film/Video Gallery on the second floor. March 21-26: "Bed-In" (1969). Tuesday at 1:30, 3:30, and 6:15; Wednesday through Saturday at 11:30, 1:30, and 3:30; and Sunday at 12:30, 2:30, and 4:30. . . . ¶ From March 28: "Imagine" (1971), a feature-length film Ono made with John Lennon; and four short films and videos. Tuesday at 1:30, 3:30, and 6:15, and Wednesday at 12 and 3.

French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—March 22 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Sorceress" (1987, Suzanne Schiffman; in French), with Tcheky Karyo and Christine Boisson. . . . ¶ March 29 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Liliom" (1934, Fritz Lang; in French, no subtitles), with Charles Boyer, Madeleine Ozeray, and Odette Florelle.

Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., movies. Before each show, at 8, Mr. Fairbanks himself will give a short talk about his life and films. March 21: "The Prisoner of Zenda" (1937, John Cromwell), with Ronald Colman, Madeleine Carroll, Fairbanks, Mary Astor, and David Niven. . . . ¶ March 28: "Gunga Din" (1939, George Stevens), with Cary Grant, Fairbanks, Victor McLaglen, Sam Jaffe, and Joan Fontaine.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Arlene Croce.)

The Accidental Tourist—It begins with the numb grief of a punctilious Baltimore travel writer, Macon Leary (William Hurt), whose twelve-year-old son was senselessly shot. Macon has become such a depressed loner that his wife (Kathleen Turner) leaves him. The movie, directed by Lawrence Kasdan, who wrote the screenplay with Frank Galati, closely follows the 1985 Anne Tyler novel, and it's about Macon's coming to life. A fiercely eager oddball (Geena Davis) who pulls him into her bed turns out to be his salvation. The plot construction is that of a screwball comedy of the thirties: poor working girl has the life force that upper-class prig needs. But people talk a formal, affected English that sounds counterfeit and everyone seems catatonic. With Amy Wright, Ed Begley, Jr., and David Ogden Stiers.—P.K. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/23/89.) (Cinema 3rd Avenue. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin. Evening performances only.)

Beaches—This movie about the lifelong friendship between two women of contrasting backgrounds—Bette Midler as CC Bloom, a showbiz-crazy Jewish redhead from New York, and Barbara Hershey as Hillary Whitney, a repressed wealthy Wasp from San Francisco—suggests the kind of material that Midler might be using for a takeoff. Instead, it's *being played for maudlin* soulfulness. After a while, it turns into an all-girl "Love Story," with Hillary becoming ghoulishly pale from heart disease and CC (now a singing star) staying at her side. If you admired Midler in "The Rose" and "Down and Out in Beverly Hills," you may want to bash your head against the wall. With Mayim Bialik, who must have been specially created to be CC at eleven, and John Heard. The director, Garry Marshall, shows no feeling for the material—not even false feeling; the script, by Mary Agnes Donoghue, is from Iris Rainer Dart's novel.—P.K. (1/23/89) (Sutton, and Embassy.)

The Bitter Tea of General Yen (1933)—This story about a cool, straitlaced girl from New England (Barbara Stanwyck) who is sexually drawn to the Chinese warlord who kidnaps her was the opening attraction at Radio City Music Hall. Tall, Swedish Nils Asther was a very peculiar Oriental, but he was certainly dazzlingly elegant and a highly exotic love object—too exotic, maybe, for moviegoers of the time, because despite the tensions of the daring interracial romance, the picture was not a box-office success. One of the most sensuously atmospheric (and least cloying) of Frank Capra's films, it suggests the influence of von Sternberg's "Shanghai Express" (1932). The screenplay, by Edward Paramore, was adapted from a story by Grace Zaring Stone.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 23.)

Cousins—Bland, dreamy effervescence is what's being sold in this canny Americanization of the celebrated French makeout movie "Cousin, Cousine" (1975). As the picture goes on and on, and you get its box-office formula—sex without messiness, family without oppressive closeness—you may begin to feel as if you were in a carefree pink padded cell. As honest, free-spirited adulterers, Isabella Rossellini and Ted Danson are at the still center, smiling serenely while the others in the cast busily bang away at their joie de vivre. Rossellini's unforced expressiveness has a grace—it's as if she were too friendly and sensible to do what we think of as "acting." Joel Schumacher directed; Stephen Metcalfe did the adaptation. With William Petersen, Sean Young, Norma Aleandro, George Coe, and Lloyd Bridges. Shot in British Columbia.—P.K. (3/6/89) (Loews New York Twin.)

The Damned (1969)—Luchino Visconti's view of the depravity in the Third Reich—grandiose, lurid, sluggish. The centerpiece is the orgy and massacre of Roehm's homosexual Brown Shirts, with gorgeous naked boys in black lace panties; Visconti doesn't seem sure what attitude to take and he stages it immaculately, reverentially. Ingrid Thulin is the fag-hag mother, a Krupp-Borgia baroness who turns her son (Helmut Berger) into a dope-addicted transvestite. It's really a story about a good boy who loves his wicked mother, and how she emasculates him and makes him decadent—the basic mother-son romance of homoerotic literature, dressed up in Nazi drag. With Dirk Bogarde, Helmut Griem, Charlotte Rampling, Florinda Bolkan, and Umberto Orsini. Though some of the actors speak their own English, this version of "The Damned" has all the disadvantages of a dubbed movie—everything sounds stilted and slightly off. The characters talk in a language that belongs to no period or country and sounds like translated subtitles.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; March 24-25.)

Dangerous Liaisons—One of the least static costume films ever made, and what costumes! The women—Glenn Close, Michelle Pfeiffer, Uma Thurman, Swoosie Kurtz, Mildred Natwick—look as if they'd been dressed by Gainsborough. (Actually, it was James Acheson, who also dressed "The Last Emperor.") Principally about the erotic power games played by the Marquise de Merteuil (Glenn Close) and the Vicomte de Valmont (John Malkovich), who were once lovers but are

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now allies and co-conspirators, this first-rate piece of work by the daring and agile director Stephen Frears is alive in a way that movies of classics rarely are. The paradisially beautiful Pfeiffer is wonderfully affecting as the pawn of the debauchers' final game. The screenwriter, Christopher Hampton, reworked his 1985 theatrical version of the 1782 novel by Choderlos de Laclos; cinematography by Philippe Rousselot.—P.K. (1/9/89) (Movieland 8th StreetTriplex, 68th St. Playhouse, Festival, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Dark Passage (1947)—"Dark" in a movie title generally seems to be an attempt to give some sinister allure to opacity and confusion. And this Bogart-Bacall bummer is no exception. Throughout most of the miserably plotted picture, Bogart, accused of murder, hides out in Bacall's fashionable San Francisco apartment while recovering from plastic surgery; with his head bandaged, he can't do much except nod appreciatively while Bacall feeds him through a glass straw. The picture is an almost total drag, though Agnes Moorehead, as the villainess, has a sensational exit through plate-glass windows. Written and directed by Delmer Daves.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 28.)

Dishonored (1931)—The dullest of the Marlene Dietrich films directed by Josef von Sternberg. Dietrich plays a "woman of the streets" who is given the chance of spiritual redemption by serving her country; she becomes the glamorous spy X-27, but falls in love with an enemy agent (Victor McLaglen). McLaglen is meant to be dashing, but he lacks style and physical grace—he's a grinning buffoon, with zero sex appeal. Dietrich goes through her repertory of teases, lowering her eyelids demurely and raising them amusingly; she's charming, but she's playing all alone. Her ironic, spacey gallantry—the way she keeps her firing squad waiting while she takes out her lipstick and touches up her mouth—is the only real entertainment in this lamely directed movie.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 29.)

The Dressmaker—The whole cast rises to the occasion—a chance to appear in John McGrath's fine adaptation of the 1973 Beryl Bainbridge novel (published here in 1974 as "The Secret Glass"). Joan Plowright as Nellie, the prudish unmarried dressmaker, and Billie Whitelaw as Margo, the widow with a roving eye who works in a munitions factory, are sisters. The setting is Liverpool in 1944, and the plot centers on what happens when sallow, skinny Rita (Jane Horrocks), the seventeen-year-old niece they have raised, falls in love with Wesley (Tim Ransom), a Yank from Mississippi. This good, inexpensive British movie is about morbid respectability, and the director, Jim O'Brien, makes it possible for the actors to create a maze of claustrophobic subtexts. It's doubtful if either Plowright or Whitelaw has ever before been this scarily effective onscreen; Whitelaw's sky-blue eyes stab you—she seems to have become the nakedest of performers. With Peter Postlethwaite, Pippa Hinchley, and Rosemary Martin.—P.K. (12/12/88) (Quad Cinema.)

East of Eden (1955)—An amazingly high-strung, feverishly poetic movie about Cain and Abel as American brothers living on a lettuce farm in California in the years just before the First World War. Elia Kazan directed this adaptation of Steinbeck's novel, and it's like seeing a series of teasers: violent moments and charged scenes without much coherence. As the romantic, alienated young hero, James Dean is decorated with all sorts of charming gaucheries; he's sensitive, defenseless, hurting. Maybe his father (Raymond Massey) doesn't love him, but the camera does, and we're supposed to; we're thrust into upsetting angles, caught in infatuated closeups, and prodded—"Look at all that beautiful desperation." It's far from a dull movie, but it's certainly a very strange one; it's an enshrinement of the mixed-up kid. With Julie Harris, who gives a memorably lyric performance, and Richard Davalos, Burl Ives, Jo Van Fleet, Albert Dekker, and Lois Smith. Script by Paul Osborn.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 24-25.)

Fanny (1932)—Though the three films of the Marcel Pagnol trilogy are interrelated, each is complete in itself. This second one was directed by Marc Allégret (and Pierre Prévert), with the same cast as the first, "Marius." After Marius (Pierre Fresnay) goes to sea, his pregnant fiancée, Fanny (Orane Démazis), marries the sailmaker (Charpin); Marius's father, César (the great Raimu), acts as godfather to his grandson. César's dominating, expansive character is the central force of the film. When Marius returns, he finds that his leaving was an irremediable mistake—that the sailmaker is acknowledged as the father of his son and that there is no place for him (until the concluding film "César"). You need a lot of tolerance for warm comic invention; it drags fearfully. In French.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; March 24-27.)

High Hopes—Mike Leigh's wacked-out comedy-drama about life in Thatcherland features three couples: the rich twits (David Bamber and Lesley Manville as a young champagne dealer and his cool socialite wife); the pushy yups (Philip Jackson and Heather Tobias as a boorish car salesman and his shrill, social-climber wife); the working poor (bearded Philip Davis and dark-eyed Ruth Sheen as a pot-smoking Marxist who scrapes by as a motorcycle messenger and his companion of ten years, who likes to grow things). This may sound like a liberal-left horror, but the English delight in extreme, preposterous silliness hasn't died even among the serious left; the characters keep turning into absurdist cartoons. It's an exuberantly likable movie—not always satisfying but never drab, never ordinary.—P.K. (2/20/89) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Hiroshima, Mon Amour (1959)—Hushed and hypnotic, it makes you so conscious of its artistry that you may feel as if you're in church and need to giggle. This first full-length film by Alain Resnais has a script by Marguerite Duras that features musical, incantatory dialogue, and a crucial line, "They make movies to sell soap, why not a movie to sell peace?" The movie, which opens with the intertwined nude bodies of a French movie actress (Emmanuèle Riva) and a Japanese architect (Eiji Okada), was taken as powerful propaganda against the atom bomb. As the film goes on, the woman tells the man about her first experience of love: it was with a German soldier, who was killed on the last day of fighting. Her lyric, masochistic account lingers in the air. With its doomed romance in the past and its tortured affair in the present, this is a woman's picture in the most derogatory sense of the term, but with

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Essentially, Dennis Potter's celebrated miniseries "The Singing Detective" is six and a half hours inside the head of a badly damaged man: the hero, a pulp novelist named Philip Marlow, is confined to a London hospital ward, where he's undergoing treatment for a grotesque skin condition. He has plenty of time to reflect, feverishly, on how and why his body has betrayed him—a double cross as gaudy and extreme and apparently arbitrary as anything in his paperback thrillers. Potter, in a mysterious flash of inspiration, has rendered Marlow's therapy in the tones of cheap melodrama. His script is a rich, audacious mixture of psychoanalytic theory and pop-culture imagery. Marlow faces down his childhood traumas and his sexual paranoia armed with nothing but a garish and tenacious imagination: he virtually lip-synchs his way to health. This difficult material has been superbly directed by Jon Amiel, and Michael Gambon's performance as the beleaguered hero is staggering. The Public Theatre shows the whole thing every Saturday. It's not better to see it this way than on television—some of its unsettling intimacy is lost—but if you missed the broadcast and can't borrow a tape, you should get yourself down there right away.

a high-cultural tone. Riva gives a remarkably fine performance. Eiji Okada says no more than an analyst might; he is simply a sounding board. And if, being Japanese, he is supposed to represent the world's conscience, he brings an unsuitably bland, professionally sympathetic, and upper-class manner to the function. The images of the two in bed are intercut with what is supposed to be documentary footage of the effect of the bomb on Hiroshima, but some of the footage is from a fictional Japanese atrocity movie. In French. —P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 27.)

Lawrence of Arabia (1962)—If you went to see it under the delusion that it was going to be about T. E. Lawrence, you probably stayed to enjoy the vastness of the desert and the pleasures of the senses that a huge movie epic can provide. Directed by David Lean, from a script by Robert Bolt, loosely based on Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," this picture fails to give an acceptable interpretation of Lawrence, or to keep its action intelligible, but it is one of the most literate and tasteful and exciting of expensive spectacles. The central figure is played quite stunningly by Peter O'Toole, though he seems to be doing "Lord Jim"—which he was cast in a couple of years later (and then it looked as if he were doing Lawrence all over again). Bolt and Lean turn the hero into such a flamboyant poetic enigma that he is displaced in the film by a simpler hero—Omar Sharif's Ali, a handsome sheikh with liquid brown eyes and conventionally sympathetic lines to speak. As it became apparent that most people in the audience hadn't the remotest idea of what the Arabs and the Turks were doing in the First World War, or which was which, or why the English cared, the question raised by the movie was, Can complicated historical events and a complex hero really get across in a spectacle? With Alec Guinness, José Ferrer, Anthony Quinn, Arthur Kennedy, Jack Hawkins, Claude Rains, Anthony Quayle, and Donald Wolfit. Cinematography by Freddie Young; music by Maurice Jarre. (The film, substantially cut after its first release, has been restored to a more or less definitive version, running 217 minutes.)—P.K. (Ziegfeld.)

Lightning Over Braddock: A Rustbowl Fantasy—This first feature by the Pennsylvania independent filmmaker Tony Buba is a strange homemade mixture of fiction, autobiography, and social documentary. Buba has made fifteen short documentaries about a dying mill town called Braddock, where he was born and raised (and where he still lives); "Lightning" is in part a self-critical retrospective of his own work, a reflection on how his reputation has increased as his town's fortunes have declined. The movie is a little in love with its own flakiness, and Buba doesn't really have the skill (or maybe just the budget) to bring off the radical shifts in tone and style. But "Lightning Over Braddock" has a lively, likable spirit, and it's rarely predictable. Buba keeps things brisk and bouncy even while he's worrying about being politically correct.—T.R. (Film Forum 1; through March 21.)

James Dean

Madame X (1966)—A woman is forced to abandon her baby and years later, having committed a murder, is defended by . . . her very own son, who does not know that . . . *she is his very own mother!* Alexandre Bisson's courtroom melodrama melted hearts in silent-movie houses in 1916 and again in 1920; Ruth Chatterton had a personal triumph in the first talkie version, in 1929; and in 1937 Gladys George gave it the benefit of her gin-and-tears voice. It requires an actress who knows how to get some mileage out of it, but in this Ross Hunter production Lana Turner hasn't the power or the technique—she isn't Madame X, she's Brand X. At the start, Turner is supposed to be a ravishing young newlywed, and the production is designed like a cocoon to protect her. There isn't a young actress in the cast, not even among the bit players. This "Madame X" isn't about mother love; it's about mummy love. With almost every line a howler, this is a camp special. David Lowell Rich directed. With Constance Bennett (in her last film appearance), Keir Dullea, John Forsythe, and Ricardo Montalban.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; March 29.)

Marius (1931)—The first film of the celebrated Marcel Pagnol trilogy. Static and visually unimaginative (Alexander Korda directed) but famous for its dialogue and characterization, and for the rich humanity Raimu brought to the role of César, the Marseilles café owner. In the film, the life along the harbor centers on this café. The story involves César's son, Marius (the elegant Pierre Fresnay, oddly miscast), who longs to go to sea, though he loves Fanny (Orane Démazis). Produced and written by Pagnol. In French. —P.K. (Film Forum 2; March 24-27.)

Mississippi Burning—Set in Mississippi in the summer of 1964, it opens with a fictionalized re-creation of the murder of the three civil-rights workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner—but it isn't really about the civil-rights movement. The director, Alan Parker, treats Southerners the way he treated the Turks ten years ago in "Midnight Express." And he twists facts here as he did there, with the same apparent objective: to come up with garish forms of violence. Two F.B.I. men (Gene Hackman and Willem Dafoe) arrive to find out what happened to the three activists, and a huge manhunt is initiated. The movie hinges on the ploy that the F.B.I. men can't stop the K.K.K. from its terrorism against blacks until they swing over to vigilante tactics. And we're put in the position of applauding the F.B.I.'s dirtiest forms of intimidation. Hackman is superb, and there's impressive work by Frances McDormand, Brad Dourif, Park Overall, and others. But the film is morally repugnant. The script is credited to Chris Gerolmo (Parker says he rewrote it).—P.K. (12/26/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Loews Tower East. . . . ¶ Warner; through March 21.)

Murmur of the Heart (1971)—Louis Malle's exhilarating high comedy about French bourgeois life. He looks into his own back yard—the film is set in Dijon in 1954, at the time of Dien Bien Phu, and it's about the sex education of the fourteen-year-old Laurent (Benoit Ferreux), the youngest, brightest son of a successful gynecologist (Daniel Gélin) and his Italian-born wife (Léa Massari). Malle sees not only the prudent, punctilious surface but the volatile and slovenly life underneath. His bourgeois bestiary is funny and appalling and also—surprisingly—hardy and happy. This is perhaps the first time on film that anyone has shown us the bourgeoisie enjoying its privileges. Massari is superb as Clara, the carelessly sensual mother who is loved by her sons because of her indifference to the bourgeois forms, which they nevertheless accept —on the surface, that is. In French.—P.K. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Nazarin (1958)—The hero is a gentle Mexican priest—a Candide who is robbed and cheated —in this simple, masterly, ambiguous film by Luis Buñuel which is (perhaps in spite of his intention) his most tender. A woman offers Nazarin a pineapple and her blessing. Nazarin is so stubbornly proud that it's a struggle for him to accept, and Buñuel himself is so proud that he will hardly allow the scene to have any weight. Humility is very difficult for him; he just tosses in the pineap-

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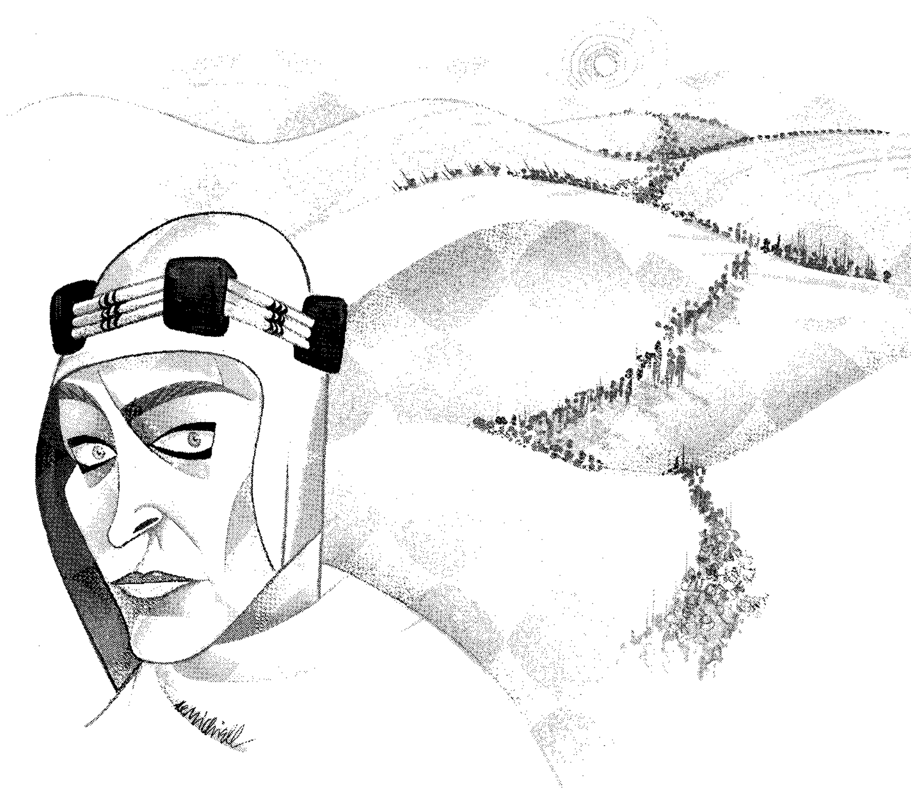
ple. He's determined not to give in to the folly of tenderness, but it's there. In Spanish.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 26.)

New York Stories—A three-part anthology film, with sections by Martin Scorsese, Francis Coppola, and Woody Allen. Scorsese's intensely enjoyable "Life Lessons" features a masterly performance by Nick Nolte as an Action painter who needs tumult in his life. (Richard Price wrote the script.) Coppola's "Life Without Zoe" is a forgettable attempt to use New York as a city out of the Arabian Nights. Woody Allen's "Oedipus Wrecks" is a Freudian vaudeville about a Jewish lawyer (played by Allen) who feels that if he marries a Gentile (Mia Farrow) he'll escape his mother (Mae Questel). (He doesn't stand a chance.) This short-story comedy is a bit too long and schematic, but it has some genuine laughs, and a lovely performance by Julie Kavner as a hopeless involuntary comic. All told, the movie is a two-base hit.—P.K. (3/20/89) (Gramercy, Cinema II, Guild, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Old Maid (1939)—Bette Davis doesn't have much talent for masochism. When she attempts the sacrificial-mother roles that were meat and potatoes to many a trouper, she builds the character so painstakingly that she loses her flair and turns mealy. In this costume picture, taken from Zoë Akin's Pulitzer Prize play version of the Edith Wharton novel, she's an unwed mother, forced to turn over her infant daughter to —of all people— Miriam Hopkins, as her married cousin, and then she must stand by and watch as her daughter grows up treating her contemptuously as a spinster aunt. Full of tight-lipped renunciation, Davis gives what might be called a creditable performance; the picture isn't bad, but it trudges along and never becomes exciting. Edmund Goulding directed smoothly, from Casey Robinson's screenplay. —P.K. (Biograph Cinema; March 26-27.)


"*Lawrence of Arabia*"

Out Cold—Teri Garr is Sunny, who murders her husband. John Lithgow is the husband's business partner, a big, shy dope with a slow-motion brain who thinks he accidentally did the killing. And Randy Quaid is a lunkhead private detective. This trim, smart, evenly paced murder comedy is set mostly in and around San Pedro, California, but the calm with which the young English director, Malcolm Mowbray, keeps everything in check doesn't seem American, exactly. His deliberateness has a lunar dimension.—P.K. (3/6/89) (8th St. Playhouse; through March 23.)

Pelle the Conqueror—An aging, weak-willed Swedish widower (Max von Sydow) and his young son (Pelle Hvenegaard) emigrate to Denmark and find work on a large estate, where they're exploited and abused. The boy, more spirited than his father, ultimately escapes. The movie, written and directed by Bille August from a novel by Martin Andersen Nexo, isn't as dreary as it sounds. August directs with great skill and feeling, and the cinematography, by Jorgen Persson ("Elvira Madigan"), is sensational. The images are never simply beautiful—they always carry a strong emotional and dramatic charge. Yet there's a basic dullness in Nexo's material which August can't transcend. For most of the picture's two and a half hours, we're moved and bored simultaneously. In Danish and Swedish.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Rain Man—Dustin Hoffman is Raymond, an autistic savant who lives in an institution in Cincinnati, and Tom Cruise is his huckster brother Charlie, an L.A. car dealer, who kidnaps him, hoping to get hold of some of the three million dollars that their father has left in trust for Raymond's care. Hoffman upstages the movie; Cruise's performance consists of not smiling too much—so as not to distract his fans from watching Hoffman. The director, Barry Levinson, stretches out the scenes until they yawn. But the picture has its effectiveness: people are crying at it. Of course they're crying at it —it's a piece of wet kitsch.—P.K. (2/6/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and Loews Paramount.)

Tap—A thirties-style semi-musical with a good strong Cagneyish role for Gregory Hines. He plays an ex-con whose true vocation is to carry on the great black tap-dance tradition founded on jazz. That's Hines' vocation in real life, too, only his way of realizing it on the screen—he hooks up with a rock band and a synthesizer, and his taps go boom—is a lot less controversial than it would be in real life. Written and directed by Nick Castle, Jr., the film is the first to tell us about the black tap community in feature-length fiction terms, and those terms finally defeat it. The numbers are staged in old-movie-musical formats, white folks are everywhere, Harlem doesn't exist. But Hines is liberated, and is exciting for the first time on the screen. With Sammy Davis, Jr.; the young dancer Savion Glover; and, playing themselves, Sandman Sims, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, Harold Nicholas, Arthur Duncan, Steve Condos, and Pat Rico.—A.C. (2/6/89; under Dancing.) (Criterion Center.)

Three Fugitives—A crumbum farce by the French writer-director Francis Veber, working in this country. (It's a remake of his "Les Fugitifs.") Nick Nolte plays a veteran armed robber who goes to a bank to open an account and is taken hostage by Martin Short, a terrified twerp of an amateur holdup man. He needs money to keep his six-year-old daughter in a special school. That's the setup: the three are variously chased, and chase each other. Nolte keeps whamming Short on the head, and the tot ignores her devoted father. He's too small for her. She's smitten by big, blond, blue-eyed Nolte; queasy pedophiliac overtones hover in the air.—P.K. (2/20/89) (Embassy.)

True Believer—A nifty thriller—fast and tense —about a Manhattan lawyer (James Woods) who was a hero of the counterculture but is now defending drug dealers and getting paid in cash. When he's goaded by his new law associate (Robert Downey, Jr.) into taking on a murder case, his eyes widen at the bare possibility that the man he's defending might be innocent. The movie makes us share the lawyer's energy and charge as he investigates the crime. He doesn't want to sleep: he lives off the excitement of having a cause. It's a pick-me-up of a movie. Nothing great, nothing terribly distinctive, but the aliveness of the texture can quicken your senses and keep you fascinated. Directed by Joseph Ruben. —P.K. (2/20/89) (Beekman, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Olympia; through March 21. . . . ¶ Baronet, and Carnegie Screening Room; starting March 22.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her long-time live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. In Spanish.—P.K. (11/14/88) (Cinema Studio.)

Working Girl—Mike Nichols made this yuppie Cinderella romance, with Melanie Griffith as Tess McGill, a poor but enterprising girl from Staten Island who fights off the sleazoid bosses and struggles to break through the educational-background barriers and climb from Wall Street secretary to executive. We're supposed to be cheered by watching Tess become part of the establishment. Griffith is very appealing, and she carries what there is of the picture, but this is the kind of star performance in which the heroine's misty eyes and soft-focus smiles (which suggest bleariness) are supposed to turn our brains to jelly. After a bouncy, promising opening, the staging becomes so broad you can't tell whether satire is intended or just dumb jokes. With Sigourney Weaver, Harrison Ford, Joan Cusack, and Alec Baldwin. The script is credited to Kevin Wade.—P.K. (1/9/89) (34th St. East, Waverly, and Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ Baronet; through March 21. . . . ¶ Criterion Center; through March 23.)

Zaza (1939)—Overdressed, stultifying "period" picture, heavy on recriminations and renunciations. Claudette Colbert is miscast as a rowdy wench, the darling of the French music halls, who becomes involved with a married gentleman—Herbert Marshall, so respectable and courteous and boringly nice that his adulterous duplicity is scarcely believable. Bert Lahr blooms (briefly) as Zaza's manager, and Helen Westley, liquored up and besequinned, plays her greedy stage mother. George Cukor directed; screenplay by Zoë Akins, from the play by Pierre Berton and Charles Simon.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; March 28.)

Reflections on Claire.

"She's been down the Nile and up the Mississippi.

Even my mother likes her.

And her legs, they leave me speechless..."

Silk Reflections

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

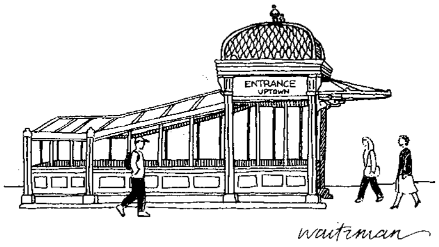
A Downtown friend writes:

Last Tuesday morning, I strolled down to Federal Plaza to take a last look at "Tilted Arc," the curved and leaning slab of Cor-Ten steel designed by the artist Richard Serra, which had been sitting there for the past eight years. It was supposed to have been moved the week before—transported, like an eighteenth-century convict, to some distant outpost—but at the last moment it was granted a temporary reprieve. "Tilted Arc" had become over the years the Cyprus Question of downtown Manhattan, and some people believed that it would never actually go away. I'd heard from friends, though, that the removal had proceeded right down to the last-rites stage.

I discovered when I got to Federal Plaza that the ground under "Tilted Arc" had been torn up, so that the cement pods in which the steel was anchored were visible. And other slabs of rusted steel had been laid out nearby—for "Tilted Arc" to rest on, I guess, after it was knocked down. Piled on those slabs were weathered beams of rough-hewn wood, like immense railroad ties. On top of the wooden beams were loops of thick metal cable that looked like what you would use if you were going to hang the Statue of Liberty. Around the wooden beams and metal slabs and loops of cable was a ring of blue-and-white N.Y.P.D. sawhorses, keeping everybody away. The whole place looked ominous and upsetting until I realized that it also looked like a group show of all the Minimalists who had come to fame alongside Serra a quarter century ago: the steel slabs looked like Carl Andre's, the weathered beams were like Robert Morris's, and the sawhorses made me think of early Donald Judd.

People trudged by on their way to the Javits Building just the way they have always trudged, as far as I could tell. It began to drizzle—it is eternal November in Federal Plaza—and, brooding over the "Tilted Arc" controversy, I decided that it was one of those events, like a high-school prom, in which normally attractive people contrive to be seen looking their absolute worst in the most public manner possible. Serra's supporters, who include most of my friends, could never make up their minds whether they wanted to convince everybody that you were going to love "Tilted Arc" once you got used to it or that its refusal to be ingratiating was what made it art. They were stuck with trying to demonstrate that, though the installation of "Tilted Arc" was an *unpopular* gesture, it wasn't an *anti-populist* gesture—not the easiest position to have to defend. Still, they argued (and argued and argued) that even if "Tilted Arc" offended the people who worked in Federal Plaza, it was nevertheless somehow tilting for the masses. To this end, they developed the fantasy that the bureaucrats hated "Tilted Arc" but the people were all for it. Later on, they reversed field, and started arguing not from high principle but from contractual obligations. They became fine-print artists.

On the other side, the opponents of "Tilted Arc," working in (and, it seems, not inclined to do much about) an environment so ugly and inhumane that it would disgrace the Ministry of Truth in an East Bloc capital, had somehow persuaded themselves that the problem wasn't Federal Plaza—the problem was "Tilted Arc." Probably the harshest and most accurate thing that could be said about "Tilted Arc" is that it fitted right in with its surroundings. That men and women working in this environment could object to what was by comparison an elegant and spare addition to the place seems bizarre. It seems still more bizarre when you consider that one of the key (and, apparently, most passionately held) arguments against "Tilted Arc" was that terrorists could use it to hide behind while they threw bombs—an idea that called to mind an image of a fin-de-siècle anarchist, complete with Ben Turpin mustache and frock coat, cowering behind "Tilted Arc" while tossing a bowling-ball bomb at a bureaucrat. "Tilted Arc" eventually became a kind of screen on which both sides projected their fears and political fantasies: on one side, a crowd of oppressed workers rose, inspired by a slab of Cor-Ten steel to throw off their chains; on the other, a gang of radicals was using modern art as both a barricade and a battering ram.



It's often said that the "failure" of "Tilted Arc" is typical, or even exemplary, of the failure of public art in our time, but if there's a conclusion to be drawn from the episode it may be just the opposite. Modern public sculpture and memorials don't, as the supporters of "Tilted Arc" insist, get accepted simply by being there for so long that people grow habituated to them. Memorials succeed when they are memorials to something. As it happens, on the day "Tilted Arc" was supposed to have been moved I was in Washington, and while there I went, as I always do, to look at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, designed by Maya Lin. When the Vietnam Veterans Memorial opened, six years ago, it was just as "controversial" as "Tilted Arc," and was attacked on much the same grounds—as the thoughtless and high-handed revenge of modernist art on a public it claimed to serve but only insulted. Today, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has become by far the most deeply admired and loved of our national monuments, and its most "modern" elements—its spareness, its simplicity, its preference for the elusive and the oblique and the reticent over the rhetorical—are what people love most. The trouble with "Tilted Arc" was that it was not a memorial to anything except the fact of its own existence. That fact was, in a sense, a noble one—a reflection of our tolerance of odd things and odd forms for their own sake. In a sense, the process that got "Tilted Arc" put in place is one that we can be proud of. But it's not one that is easy to memorialize. We've licked the problem of how, in a democracy, to commemorate people we admire or people we miss, but nobody has solved the problem of how you make the democratic process—pluralism itself—look good in marble or metal. You can't do it with neoclassical columns—Washington shows that. You can't do it with Masonic symbols—the dollar bill shows that. And you can't do it with Cor-Ten steel in the middle of a plaza.

After I heard that "Tilted Arc" had finally been dismantled, on Wednesday night, I began to wish that somebody had blowtorched into it the names of all the people who spoke for it and all the people who spoke against it, and that it had been left there as a real monument to our time—a Memorial of Good Intentions, High Hopes, and Mixed Results.

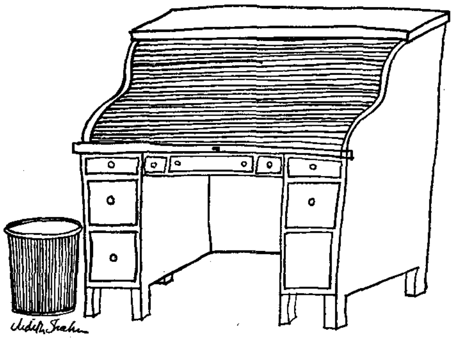
• •

Candy Man

IT wouldn't be Easter in Kingston, New York, without Nekos chocolates. On Valentine's Day, Nekos Pharmacy clears out some of the tables near its lunch counter, removes patent medicines from its shelves, and transforms itself into a wonderland of handmade molded-chocolate Easter candies. In the window, on the shelves and the remaining tables, and along the lunch counter are milk-chocolate Easter baskets filled with bright-colored penny candies; white-chocolate crosses; and semisweet brontosauruses. There are chocolate roller skates, rocket ships, airplanes, ducks, hens, and hound dogs. Not all are brown or white. Nekos chocolates are also made in a palette of five springtime pastels, and many pieces are swirled with all the colors, for a spectacular marbleized effect. You want a bunny? What kind? Bunny leaning on log? Big-eared bunny on all fours? Bunny holding a gun? Bunny on a motorcycle? On the counter behind the cigar case stands a three-foot-tall chocolate bunny with a sign around its neck saying "WIN ME—ASK HOW."

The Nekoses have been chocolatiers since 1896, when Anthony Nekos opened a candy store in the nearby town of Mechanicville. Five years later, they moved to Kingston, and they've been there ever since. Anthony's son Steve learned by watching, and today, at sixty-two, he makes the chocolates the way his father did, piece by piece. The chocolates are sold at Nekos Pharmacy, and nowhere else.

The candies are concocted next to the pharmacy, in a long, narrow storefront room kept cold enough to allow the molded chocolate to harden properly. Steve Nekos sits in a chair cushioned with three foam-rubber pillows. He wears a tweed cap and gold-rimmed glasses, and he works at a low table with a marble top. Using his right hand, which is coated with chocolate nearly all day, he scoops molten chocolate out of a warming sink onto the marble slab, and kneads it gracefully, one-handed, pushing and swirling it around. It's a process that looks like something three-year-olds get punished for—playing with food, mushing it into a big, sumptuous pile.



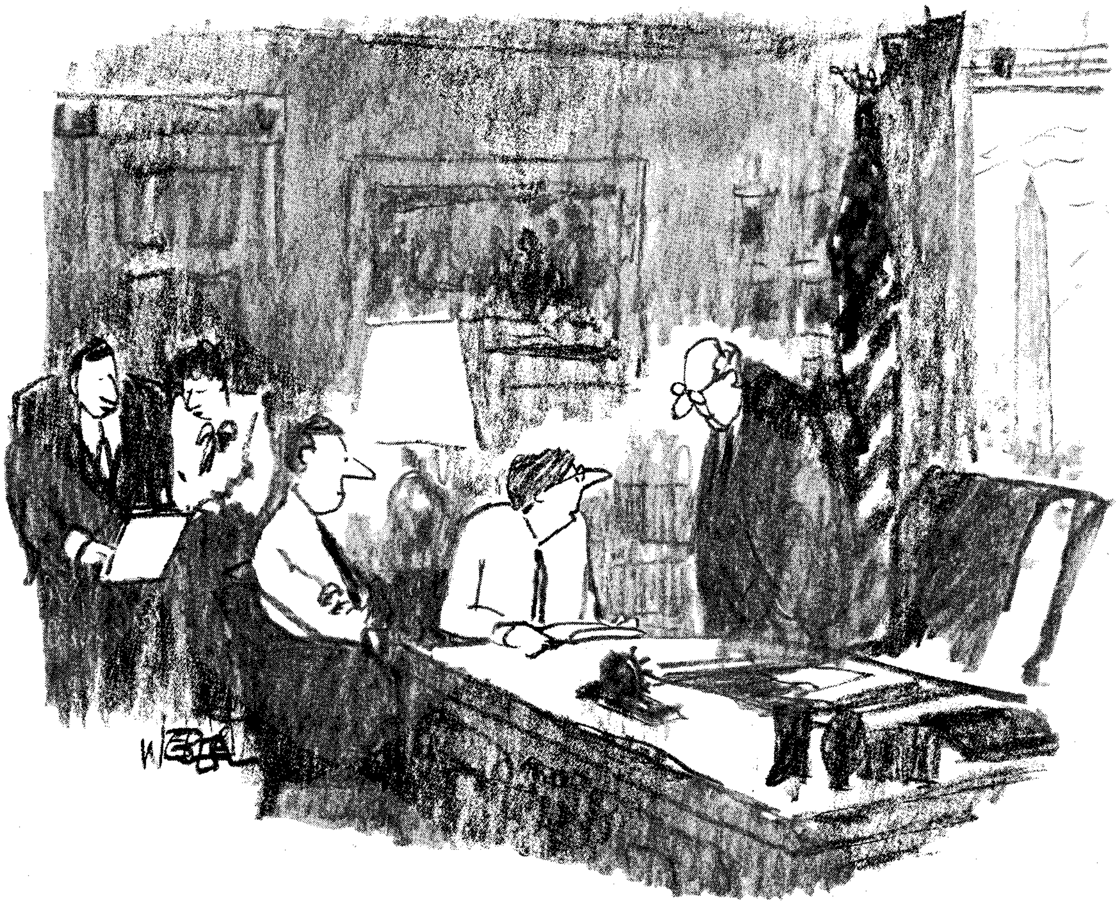
He uses no thermometer. When he feels the chocolate begin to cool, he picks out a mold with his left hand. With his right hand he scoops some chocolate off the marble and firmly squeezes it out of his fist into the mold. He taps the mold once or twice against the table, sets it in a rack, and goes back to stroking the chocolate still on the marble, keeping it pliable and soft. To replenish the warming sink, Steve's brother Louis hammers ten-pound blocks of chocolate into pieces and melts them down in a copper bowl kept in a hot-water bath on a single-burner gas stove just behind the marble-topped table. Occasionally, Steve's son Pete walks past and gives the chocolate in the copper bowl a stir with a wooden spoon. And while Steve works away, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, sisters, children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews come by to ferry newly made chocolates out to the store or to remind Steve that they're running out of semisweet hound dogs.

Some of Steve's molds are from the turn of the century, and are made of nickel and tin stamped to turn out bunnies, Kewpie dolls, eggs, and fat-cheeked urchins. Newer molds are forty years old; they're made of thick clear plastic and turn out Popeyes and blimps and other popular postwar motifs. Steve doesn't like really new molds—those manufactured in the last few years—because they produce a dull surface instead of the slick, shiny skin of a well-made piece of chocolate.

As the cooled chocolates come from the molds, plain and naked-looking, decorating specialists in the family apply chocolate ribbon garlands along the seams and cover the surfaces with spangles, jimmies, little marshmallow eggs, and jelly beans. They also do custom decorating: taped to a shelf is a request for "Airplane with one green and one blue Easter egg."

Steve refuses to sell wholesale because the idea of reducing the price implies that it is inflated to begin with. "We work hard and we charge a fair price," he says. At Nekos Pharmacy, a small (five-inch) bunny costs eighty cents, the three-foot-tall one a hundred and fifty dollars. And Steve doesn't see himself as a competitor of fancy chocolatiers like Kron and Godiva. Long ago, he used Van Houten's chocolate, but about thirty years ago he decided that he liked the ten-pound blocks of Peter's confectionery chocolate as much as any European brand. The vivid colors he uses, along with small air holes that pit the surface of his candies, make Nekos chocolates different from those sold in candy boutiques at fancy department stores, but they suit his taste, and customers cry for more.

"There used to be four thousand candy stores in New York State," Steve says as he glides his hand through a puddle of soft chocolate on the marble. "I mean the kind of candy stores that make their own, the way I do. Now, my chocolate salesman tells me, they're down to thirty." As he works, passersby poke their heads in through the front door, which is never locked. Some say nothing—just nod and wave to Steve while inhaling the powerful aroma of warm chocolate. Others call a hello, and Steve calls back, or sometimes waves a hand, covered with chocolate to the wrist. Above a wash sink next to the copper bowl is a child's drawing that is obviously of him—glasses and tweed cap are the giveaways. Its caption, rendered in spidery block letters, is "CANDY MAN."



"Our deficit-reduction plan is simple, but it will require a great deal of money."

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Real Rabbits

A YOUNG woman writes:

Betty was born on a farm. Driving through New Hampshire a few years ago, a friend of mine saw a hand-lettered sign by the side of the road that read "BABY RABBITS—$5." He pulled over, because he was worried about me and thought a baby rabbit might help. In the last stage of studying for oral exams in English literature, I had begun talking to strange animals on the street—a sparrow taking a dust bath, a cat slinking by, a squirrel with its back turned. They didn't expect me to pronounce "genre" with a French accent or to talk seriously, as if I cared, about the Miltonic masque, or the pleasure of the text, or heteroglossia, or chronotopes, or discourse in the novel. When addressed, they perked up their ears and regarded me warily and without a trace of the condescending smile that a professor gets on his face just before he says, "Good point." They were eating and sitting in the sun and scratching. They were licking their legs. They were intelligent and attractive and at peace.

My friend looked into a big wooden box. There were half a dozen small rabbits in a heap in one corner, but there was one rabbit off on her own, cocky and self-possessed and combing her ears. He lifted her out and paid his five dollars, and she came to live with me. I named her Betty.

Betty was dark brown, almost black; her guard hairs were tipped with gold. When she was a baby, she was small enough to sit in the palm of my hand, but she grew to be a twelve-pound rabbit with a large, handsome ruff. She lived in a rabbit hutch in my room.

Rabbits can be house-trained and taught to swim, to come when called, and to know what they shouldn't do. But—and this is the only way in which they resemble cats—they are defiant. In the tradition of a rabbit named Peter, they are bad on purpose, and when they're caught chewing on the phone cord or leaping into the garbage they will stop and gaze at you balefully, without remorse. Betty didn't have a mean or deceitful bone in her body; if she was mad at you, or if she didn't like you, she bit you hard and was done with it. We had our worst falling-out over the refrigerator. Betty had a passion for electric cords. They must have had a nice give to them under her teeth, like spaghetti al dente. She knew they were forbidden, but on one insufficiently supervised summer afternoon something—the heat, a feeling of to-hell-with-it-all, the memory of her past two phone cords—got the better of her. After a few hours during which she hadn't come around to be petted or to pull at my socks, I realized that something was wrong. When I called her, there was a long silence, and I became aware that the refrigerator no longer hummed. She finally appeared, easing out from under the coiled element at the back of the fridge. She was hot, and long strands of moldy white dust dangled from her ears. She looked pleased with herself. The repairman was amazed that she hadn't been killed.

Betty was a great expresser of joy. She shot straight up in the air sometimes, just for the fun of it, and she loved to lie on her side on the bed, like an odalisque. She loved to have her snout petted, and when she was relaxed she thrust her back feet out behind her and let her ears fall against her shoulders. Her black eyes, half closed, assumed a beautiful almond shape.

She also loved to eat. Her daily diet was Purina rabbit chow (alfalfa pellets) and carrots or broccoli, but she also craved leftover salad (without the dressing), apples, grapes, pecans, sunflower seeds, raisins, and chocolate chips. I think she had only one chocolate chip in her life, actually—she snatched it off the kitchen floor before I could stop her. She was wily about food and could not be bribed. Once, when she was hiding behind the stove, I laid a trail of raisins out into the hall, but she wouldn't follow it. She bagged the raisins within reach and then retreated.

I thought Betty might like to have some rabbit company, so when a friend told me about a lab rabbit that needed a home I offered mine. Alice, an eight-month-old New Zealand White, had been the control in and only survivor of an experiment on interferon. She wasn't used to company, and Betty wasn't pleased to meet her anyway. They scratched each other viciously when they were introduced, so for a while I kept them separated; Alice spent her first months with us in her own hutch or ricocheting madly off the furniture—bed to dresser to chair. She could leap by herself into the opening of her hutch, five feet off the floor, and preferred that to my lifting her. She growled when she ate, and guarded her food with her front feet. In time, Alice's only real wildness was the abandon with which she would roll on the bed, although she was always fierce when annoyed. She was as pleasant to be with, in her own, opinionated way, as Betty.

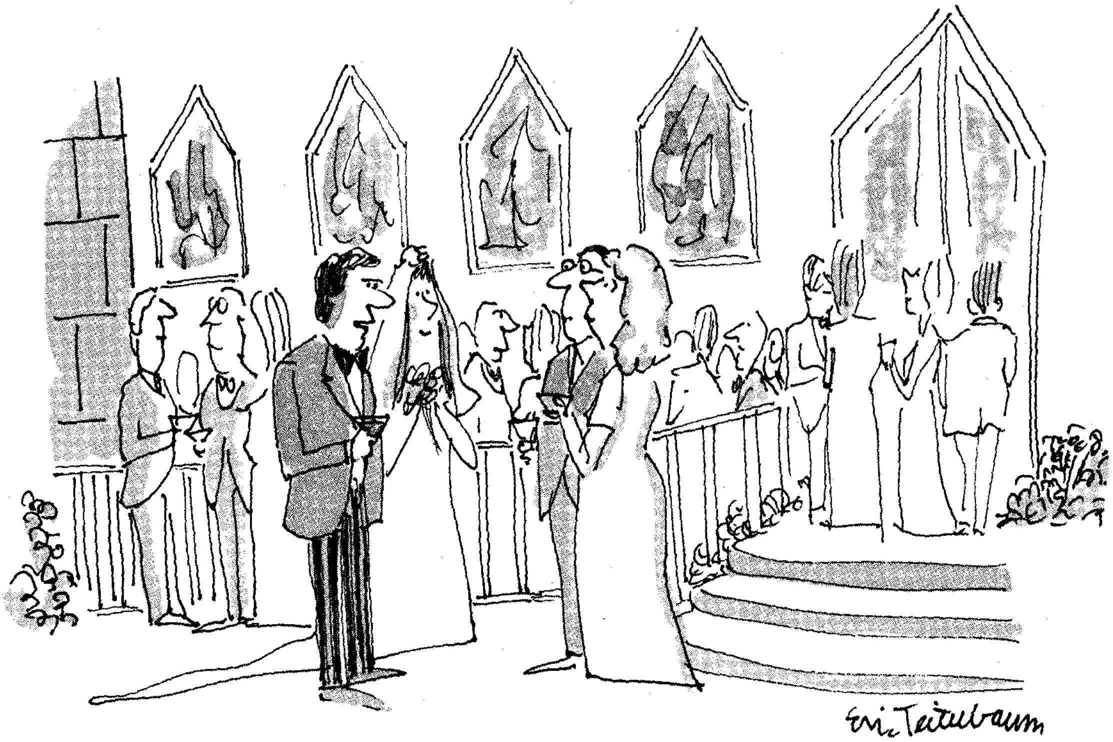
The ears of a rabbit are his or her particular glory and humor. They tilt up and down independently of each other; they swivel like furred radar toward sounds imperceptible to people. Alice and Betty would often lie quiet, seemingly asleep, except for their ears, each ear tuned in to a different source, each turned in a different direction. Rabbits will be startled by sudden movements but not by sudden noises. They anticipate those. Rabbits spend a lot of time grooming, but they spend the most time on their ears, combing them with their licked forefeet, inserting their long, narrow back feet in them to scratch. A rabbit's ears are very soft and very warm; the many veins in them rise up under the fur. Backlit, their ears look like leaves.

"I told the truth and they set me free."

Hardly anything is as much fun as watching a rabbit. Rabbits are by turns beautiful, cocky, goofy, and affectionate. The poet William Cowper kept three hares to stave off his depressions. In the epitaph for his eight-year-old hare, Tiney, he captured the animal's nature as well as Beatrix Potter's drawings do: "A Turkey carpet was his lawn, Whereon he loved to bound, To skip and gambol like a fawn, And swing his rump around." Cowper knew that it is hard to be sad around a rabbit: "I kept him for his humor's sake, For he would oft beguile My heart of thoughts that made it ache, And force me to a smile."

Betty died a year ago. She was only three. She died of toxic shock, from a hair ball. Rabbits are supposed to eat lots of hay to aid their digestion, but Betty wasn't interested in hay. Then Alice, who loved her hay, died last month, of pneumonia. I have an apartment full of rabbits: china rabbits, rabbit boxes, rabbit books, rabbit mugs and trivets and cups and saucers, rabbit Christmas decorations, rabbits in silver and gold. But I haven't got a single real rabbit—no rabbit scratching its ears or kicking its feet back. Like

William Cowper, I know
I will be the worse for it.



"For the time being we'll be living with my folks, but our ultimate goal is to live with Denise's folks."

Domino's

IF you grew up in Ann Arbor, where there once really was an Ann and an arbor, you feel that the myth of Domino's—of the callow fellow who started a little business in the next town back in 1960 and nearly failed but persevered; the delivery-in-the-neighborhood concept; the red-white-and-blue logo—is something sacred. And, especially if you once worked after school at Domino's Pizza, back in the days when Ann Arbor was nothing more than a nice, kooky university town and Domino's hadn't yet built a "corporate headquarters" on the gentle land off Earhart Road, you're likely to feel violated when a P.R. agent calls you up at the office (yes, you've since moved to New York City, and now you work in an office) and tells you that Domino's Pizza has made it to New York City, that there is now a Domino's on Maiden Lane, in the heart of Wall Street, and that people who work downtown can order their Domino's pizzas by fax machine and pay for them by American Express and have them delivered to their offices in less than thirty minutes. What you want to say to this P.R. agent, if only you could say it fast enough, is that once, when you were sixteen, your friend Danny told you what a great place Domino's was to work. He told you about cruising in the car with Fleetwood Mac blasting on the radio and a stack of fresh pies (they were always called pies) in the hotbox on the seat next to you, about ringing doorbells and having pleasant moms and dads come to the door and give you decent tips and thank you for getting their pizzas to them hot and on time. You want to tell this P.R. agent that in those days pizza was pizza with a personal touch, and that Kathy, the soft-spoken manager of the Domino's store up on Plymouth Road, where your friend Danny was working, let you have a job there even though you lied a bit about your age and said you were eighteen. You were too young for Domino's to insure as a driver, but Kathy forgave you and said she'd teach you to make pies instead. How can you explain to a P.R. agent what it was like to be forgiven for your first real lie, and then to be handed a scratchy new Domino's shirt (worn with navy-blue slacks—never jeans—and sneakers) and a Domino's baseball cap and to be taught to spin dough? How can you explain smacking it, stretching it, lifting it with fists, and twirling it? How can you explain that there came a day when you let it slip off your hands and spin free in the air, and it returned to you the way you had always hoped it would, perfectly round, ready to slap onto a tray, to sauce evenly, to cheese just to the edges, to dot with pepperoni, mushrooms, and green peppers, and to place tenderly in the oven? You'd also like to tell the P.R. agent that sometimes you and your buddy flung the dough back and forth to each other across the little store on Plymouth Road. You tossed it and then took a giant step back, tossed again and took another step, and so on, until you had it whizzing like a Frisbee across the room, and your buddy still managed to catch it, and eventually this same lovingly handled dough ended up as the just-right thin crust on the large double-cheese that a bunch of friends ate in a basement—the kind of basement where parents never roamed and the rock was turned up loud and a certain couple were always making out in front of everyone, right there on the couch.

Those were the days, you'd like to tell the P.R. agent, when people sometimes stopped by in person to order their dinner. But mostly they ordered by phone (it was the beginning of the end, you now see), and if their address was on Penberton Drive, that street of fancy, architect-designed houses in the woods, which seems quaint in the light of recent Ann Arbor developments, the drivers would argue over whose turn it was to take a trip, and if it was your friend Danny's turn he would grin at you behind the glass, where you were dusting another perfect moon of dough with flour, and would hold the cardboard box high over his head and say, "I'm taking this here Penberton pie on a ride, and I'm coming back a rich man."

SHORT EASTER

Fogel, a man over sixty, could not remember its ever happening before—the advent of daylight-saving time clipping an hour off Easter. Church bells rang in the dark; the pious would be scrambling about in their topcoats and hats, turning the clocks ahead. All day, the reluctantly budding earth would wear its crown of cloudy firmament a bit awry. Easter had always struck Fogel as a holiday without real punch, though there was, among the more vivid of his childhood memories, a magical peep into a big sugar egg; it had been at his aunt's house, in Connecticut, where the houses seemed cleaner than in New Jersey, the people wealthier, the daffodils a brighter yellow. Inside the egg, paper silhouettes spelled out a kind of landscape—a thatch-roofed cottage, a rabbit wearing a vest, a fringe of purple flowers, a receding path and paper mountains—bathed in an unexpectedly brilliant light. Where had the light come from? There must have been a hole in the egg besides the one he peeped into, a kind of skylight, admitting to this miniature world a giant illumination.

But, generally, the festivity that should attend the day had fallen rather flat: quarrelsome and embarrassed family church attendances, nobody quite satisfied with their Easter clothes; melancholy egg hunts in some muddy back yard, the smallest child confused and victimized; headachy brunches where the champagne punch tasted sour and conversation lagged. Perhaps if Fogel had not been led to live north of Boston, where the bulb plants poked through dead lawns like consciously brave thoughts and even forsythia was shy of blooming, nature might have encouraged the ostensible mood of hope and beginning again. But the day was usually raw, and today was no exception—a day of drizzle and chill, only an hour less of it.

Fogel was sixty-two, and felt retirement drawing closer. In the daily rub he discovered all sorts of fresh reasons for irritation. The line at the post office was held up by people buying money orders, and the line at the grocery store by people buying state lottery tickets. It seemed to him sheer willful obstructionism. Why didn't these people have checking accounts, and do their gambling on the stock market? Driving to work, when he did not take the commuter train, Fogel resented being tailgated, and especially by young drivers, and very especially by young men in sunglasses, their identity further shielded by tinted windshields and newly fashionable opaque side windows. One morning, the car behind him, a low scarlet sports model, wore a kind of mask or muzzle of dark vinyl over its grille, and this ultra-modern, ultra-protective touch infuriated him, just as did cardboard sun shields in parked cars, and leather-ridged, fingertipless driving gloves, and Fuzzbusters blatantly fastened above dashboards, and bumper stickers declaring "SHIT HAPPENS" or "SUPPORT WILDLIFE—THROW A PARTY." The vinyl-faced car was frantic to pass, and nosed toward the right and, finding there an onrolling eighteen-wheeler, nosed back and swerved left, into a lane that in a few hundred yards terminated in a blinking yellow arrow. Fogel pressed on the accelerator, to keep abreast of the boy and hold him out in the doomed lane. Fogel smiled behind the wheel, picturing the other car's satisfying crash into the great arrow—the raucous grating of metal, the misty explosion of glass, and himself sailing serenely on in his middle lane. But the boy, getting the picture, cut in so sharply that Fogel had to brake or hit him; he hit the brakes, and the youthful driver, steering one-handed, held up the middle finger of the other hand for Fogel to see as the red car, belching, pulled away.

If Fogel's stately Volvo had been equipped with a button that annihilated other vehicles, he would have used it three or four times a mile. Almost every other automobile on the road—those that passed him, those so slow he had to pass them, those going just his speed and hanging in his side mirrors like pursuing furies—seemed a deliberate affront, restricting his

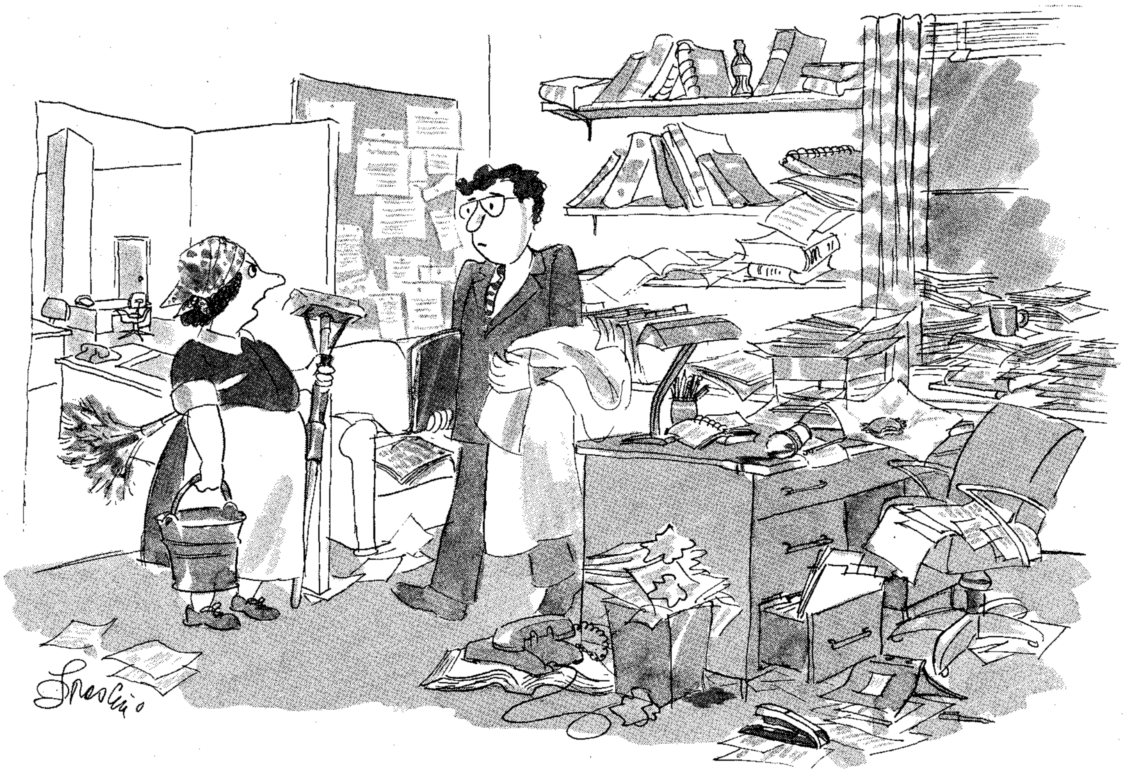
No, Billy, I don't play the horn anymore. I just like to take it out every once and again so's to give an old friend a great big tallywhack on the head!
That's your right, Grandpa. Your right and prerogative as a jazz musician.
Shanahan

freedom and being somehow *pretentious* about it. What was the point of that sinister Darth Vader-like mask over a grille? No point, just pure intimidation and pretension. Which were, he had come through sixty years to realize, the aim of almost all human behavior.

HIS body's accumulating failures also angered him. His eyelashes kept falling into his eyes, and the presbyopia of late middle age prevented him from seeing, in the mirror, his own eyes well enough to take the lashes out. A tantalizing refusal of focus, like the pressure of water that keeps us from seizing a tempting shell on the sandy bottom of six feet of crystalline sea, frustrated him, and when he put on his reading glasses he could see the dark curved foreign body but not get his fingers and the corner of a handkerchief in behind the lenses to remove it. So he would blink and grimace and curse and wish he had a young wife; his wife's vision was no better than his own, and dismissingly she said things like "It will work its way out" or "Maybe it just *feels* like an eyelash." His mother, he could not help but remember, could roll his lid on a Q-Tip and deftly stab away a fleck of dirt agonizing his sensitive cornea. But his mother, he realized now, at the time had been half his present age, though she had seemed ageless, enormous, and omnipotent.

Flying back from New York to Boston late one afternoon this past winter, he had sat across the aisle from a young man and woman, both about thirty, who evidently had not known each other before taking seats side by side. The man was a bit beefy, with a reddish-blond mustache and thinning pale hair; the woman, all but eclipsed from Fogel's angle, held a large cardboard folder and seemed to be in a state of some excitement. Her hands, gesturing and flickering in front of the oval airplane window, appeared ringless and agitated. Her voice, as she explained herself—the advertising agency she was taking the folder to, her mixed feelings about living in New York, her roommate's sayings and comical attitude toward life—did a penetrating dance, tireless and insistent, though her voice was high and light. Perhaps she was less than thirty—just starting out, testing her powers. She talked incessantly but, as it were, abashedly, throwing her words out in a feathery way, as if to soften their impact. "Yeahhh?" she would add, nonsensically, to a sentence, and she put on a soft quick giggle, a captivating titter, a kind of shimmer of shyness in which she wrapped her unrelenting verbal assault upon her seatmate, who responded—how could he not?—with ever more murmurous and authoritative replies, concerning cities and work and all other areas where he might be supposed to wield male expertise. This man's chunky pale hands began to gesture, to chop the air; he pompously crossed and recrossed his legs and preeningly lifted his shoe, rotating the tip; his voice grew gravelly and confiding as the feathery, questioning, giggling, excited voice of the other assaulted his ear and, unintentionally, Fogel's.

Fogel had been talked to, long ago, by a woman in a voice exactly like this. It had been a bath, her voice, in which he grew weightless, an iridescent bubbly uplifting in which floated always a question, the lilting teasing female question, to which his maleness, clumsy and slow to comprehend though it was, was the only answer. He and this woman, Fogel further remembered, had come to an unhappy end, which had seemed tragic and hard to swallow at the time but which now, to this elderly man sitting above the clouds while the engines droned and the stewardesses struggled to distribute drinks and the girl across the aisle deliciously prattled and her naked hands flickered against the deepening darkness of the airplane window, appeared merely inevitable, since all things end. One small side effect still rankled: their affair ended in the springtime, and his former mistress declined to invite him and his family to an Easter-egg hunt she and her husband annually gave. His children's feelings were hurt, and for consolation they were taken out, after church, to



"Hold it right there, young man. You're not leaving me with this mess to clean up all by myself."

• •

eat at the local pancake house. Heaps of pancakes, Fogel remembered—buckwheat, buttermilk, blueberry—that seemed, soaked in syrup, almost unswallowably sweet.

And yet, when the plane landed and the scramble to retrieve things from the overhead rack took over, Fogel forgot to look, as he had been intending, at the young woman, to check out her height, the breadth of her hips, her face full on, her lovely long lively hands, to see if they were truly ringless. While his attention was elsewhere or nowhere she must have stood and brushed past him and out of his life forever. She remained with him only as a voice, the voice of flirtation.

A SONG

I wish you were here, dear,
I wish you were here.
I wish you sat on the sofa
and I sat near.
The handkerchief could be yours,
the tear could be mine, chin-bound.
Though it could be, of course,
the other way around.

I wish you were here, dear,
I wish you were here.
I wish we were in my car,
and you'd shift the gear.
We'd find ourselves elsewhere,
on an unknown shore.
Or else we'd repair
to where we've been before.

I wish you were here, dear,
I wish you were here.
I wish I knew no astronomy
when stars appear,
when the moon skims the water
that sighs and shifts in its slumber.
I wish it were still a quarter
to dial your number.

I wish you were here, dear,
in this hemisphere,
as I sit on the porch
sipping a beer.
It's evening; the sun is setting,
boys shout and gulls are crying.
What's the point of forgetting
if it's followed by dying?

—Joseph Brodsky

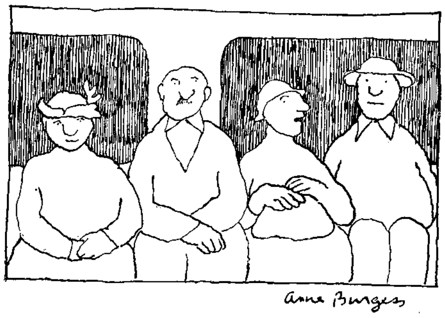
• •

Fogel's absent-mindedness was becoming alarming. On this strangely short Easter, as bells prodded the air in the town below the hill where he lived, he walked to his mailbox to retrieve the ponderous and slippery morning paper, and his old gray-muzzled dog, a Labrador retriever, flushed the six or so mourning doves that gathered on a warm open slope, amid scrub brush, above the curving driveway. Every weekend morning, Saturday and Sunday, this happened, the dog ponderously charging forward and the mourning doves thrashing into the air with an abrupt whistle and merged beating of wings, and yet Fogel always forgot it would happen, and was startled so that his heart raced, his blood leaping like another dove. His heart would keep thumping as he walked back up the hill with the many-sectioned, pretentious Sunday newspaper in his arms. The thumping felt dangerous, and he felt endangered when his wife, at breakfast, proposed that he help her with the spring raking. "We were unfor*giv*ably sloppy last fall," she said. "We left leaves under all the bushes and over by the rocks, and now they'll smother the new growth if we don't dig them out. You can't trust the lawn boys to do it; it was their stupid useless blower that put the leaves there in the first place."

Unlike those of the girl on the plane, this woman's powers were long established, and she felt no need to test them. She moved back and forth between kitchen island and sink, between sink and refrigerator and stove, with an insatiable silver-haired energy. As Fogel sat at the breakfast table puzzling over the paper, trying to remember which sections he had already read, he felt pushed from behind, tailgated. How did she know he hadn't, sentimentally, decided to go to church? "I'll never forget," she went on, "the year we went to Morocco and didn't get the leaves off the front beds until May and the poor tulips had all grown *inches* under the mulch—horrible, these pathetic white snaky stems growing sideways! Once the sun got to them they straightened up but all summer until they died back were shaped like the letter 'L.' They all had elbows!" This monologue, he recognized, was a matured version, hardened into jagged edges and points that prodded and hurt, of the young woman's feathery, immersing discourse across the airplane aisle—a version of that female insistence upon getting male attention, a force as irresistible as the ability of freezing water to split rocks.

"I'm trying to read the paper," Fogel pointed out.

"I think it's grotesque, it's absolutely *dod*dery," she said, "the way you've taken to dawdling over the paper, even the real-estate section, even the cooking tips! It's a bad habit you've gotten into from killing time on the train. Nobody expects you to read everything, they just want you to glance at the ads."



"Isn't it rather cold and dismal outdoors?" he asked.

"No more so than it ever is this time of year. The longer we work, the warmer it will get. If you think about it, the sun this time of year's as strong as an August sun, though it doesn't feel that way. Don't be a doddery dawdler. Come on—one hour of good stiff yard work and then the Allisons' brunch and you can watch the football playoffs."

"They're over."

"Are they honestly? I thought they were endless."

"You were confused by the Hula Bowl. It's hockey and basketball now."

"How can you tell? It's all just ugly brutes bashing into each other. It's horrible, the way television has turned violence into a joke." She had suddenly left the kitchen.

Meekly, draggingly, Fogel followed. Pulling moist compacted oak leaves from underneath the forsythia and lilacs, careful not to let a budding twig poke his eye, he was reminded of an Easter-egg hunt, and in his reverie, while his wife swooped back and forth with sheets of last year's leaves and bundles of brisk directives, his brooding mind warmed his old indignation at not having been invited to that party given by his recently forsaken inamorata. She could have trusted him. He would have stood off to one side and been distant and discreet while his children hunted and his wife mixed it up socially. Insult was added to injury when, some months later, at a third family's house, he was shown home movies of the day—the scampering children, their faces in closeup smeared with chocolate and anxiety about getting their share; the men, in business suits and pastel shirts, standing on the brown lawn in little conferences of three or four, holding wineglasses and pâté-laden crackers; and the women, all in miniskirts in that era, swooping about after their children with brown paper bags and discarded sweaters. It was a familiar scene, year after year, except that this year he was not in it; no matter how the camera panned and skidded from group to group, Fogel was invisible. His former mistress wore a glistening purple dress, he seemed to remember, that just barely covered her bustling hindquarters, and she clowned for the camera when it came her way, her lips moving to frame a gay feathery voice that was inaudible.

How tenacious, really, forsythia is of last fall's leaves! And the English ivy was worse yet, more clingy and snaggy. The teeth of Fogel's little bamboo bush rake kept snapping in the struggle with hostile vegetation. One of his fantasies was a kind of ray gun that, directed at a plant or tree, would not only kill it but instantly vaporize it into a fine, fertilizing ash. Agricultural labor, this endless plucking of weeds and replowing of fields, had always seemed to him the essence of futility; after sixty years he was coming to realize that all work, legal or medical or, like his own, financial, was also a Sisyphean matter of recycling, of pushing inert and thankless matter back and forth, of turning over (in his case) the compost of corporate debt. All labor was tied to human life, which was as pointless as that of any new little green weed already eagerly sprouting beneath the damp-blackened leaves.

Wm Hamilton

"'Leverage,' by Goldman, Sachs."

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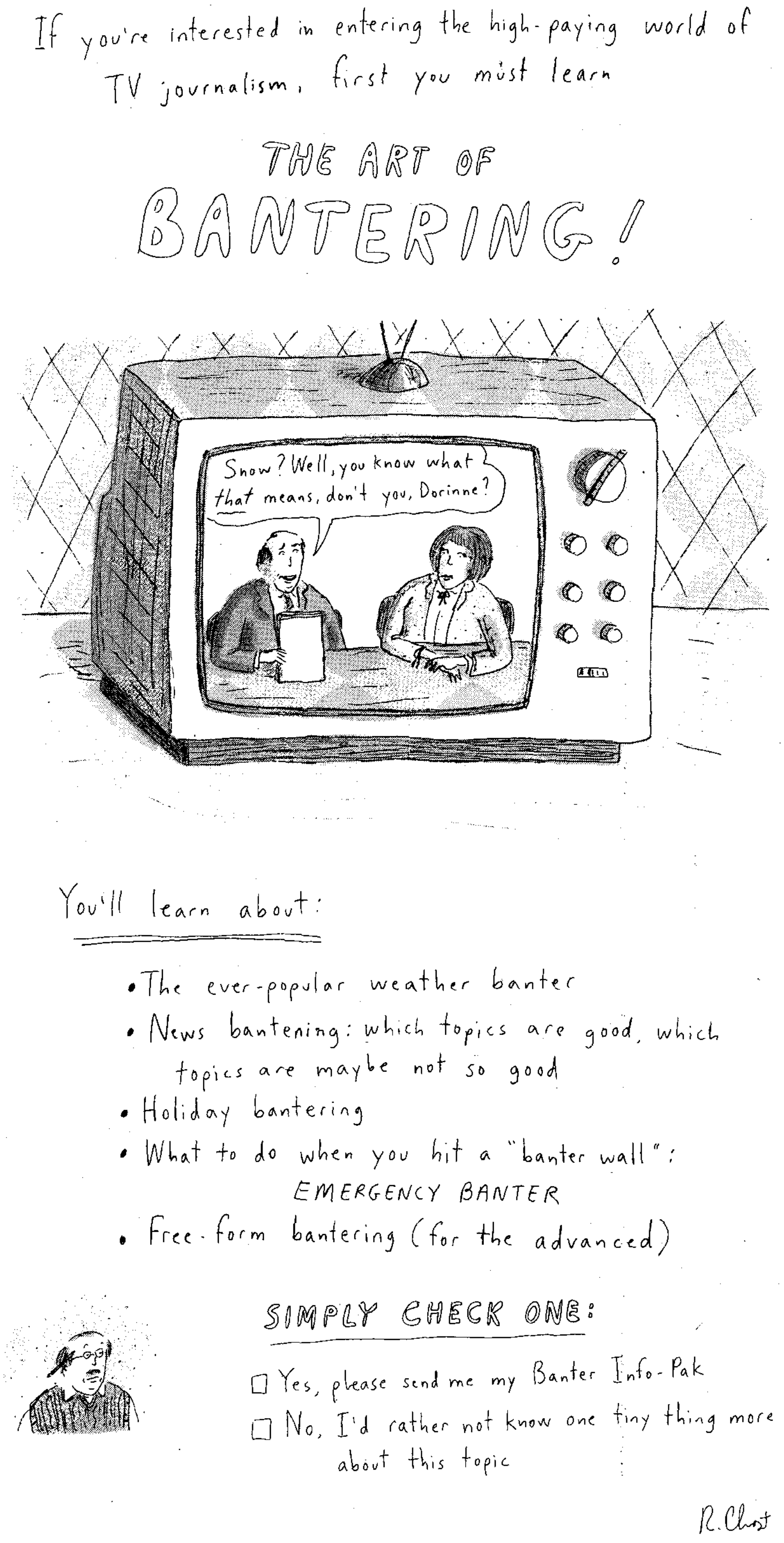
THE Allisons' brunch was also pointless—the same dozen aging couples, with three widows and a bachelor, that they saw every weekend. Throughout the gathering Fogel kept trying to glimpse, out of the corners of his eyes, the shoulders of his navy-blue blazer, and brushing at the gray hairs that kept appearing there; he was shedding. To get himself through a strenuous conversation on the future of yachting after this winter's debacle in San Diego, he accepted a second Bloody Mary. Then he prudently switched to the faintly sour, platinum-colored champagne punch. One widow told him he should take his cholesterol count very seriously; if her husband had, she wouldn't be a widow now. Tears suddenly troubled her eyes, with their cobalt-blue contact lenses. Another woman, in a purplish dress, came up to Fogel and pressed her wrinkled face upward toward him as if straining to see through a besmirched skylight, and launched her voice into an insistent sweet singsong. He regretted that no movie camera—a video camera was what they used now, with a built-in soundtrack—was at work recording the fact that he was here, at this party: that he had been invited. He and his wife left at two-thirty, which felt nearer noon than that. Because the clocks had been jumped ahead, the day kept feeling in retard of where it actually was. It was later than he thought. The cold drizzle intensified, and discouraged returning to the yard work; the bursitis in his shoulders ached from all that reaching with the rake. He found some golf on television. The tour had moved east from the desert events, with lavender mountains in the background and emerald fairways imposed upon cactus terrain and with ancient Hollywood comedians as tournament sponsors, to courses in the American South, with trees in tender first leaf and azaleas in lurid bloom. Young blond men putted, over and over, for birdies. A tremendous drowsiness seized Fogel as he watched within his easy chair. The fresh air and yard work, the gin and tomato juice, the champagne and the effort to be sociable all added up to a crushing accumulation. Stealthily, avoiding his


If you're interested in entering the high-paying world of TV journalism, first you must learn
THE ART OF BANTERING!
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You'll learn about:
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• What to do when you hit a "banter wall": EMERGENCY BANTER
• Free-form bantering (for the advanced)
SIMPLY CHECK ONE:
☐ Yes, please send me my Banter Info-Pak
☐ No, I'd rather not know one tiny thing more about this topic
R. Chast

• •

own bedroom, where his wife could be heard chattering on the telephone to one of her many woman friends, he took a section of the newspaper that perhaps he had not already read and lay down on the bed in their younger son's old room. Posters of European cars and American rock stars were still on the walls, though the boy had left for college fifteen years ago. A pipe rattled as fresh steam hit condensation in an iron elbow; Fogel had become sensitive to his house, identifying with its creaks, its corners of decay, its irreversible expenditures of energy. He tried to study the section of newspaper, the financial section. "THE DEFICIT PROBLEM—IS IT ALL IN OUR MINDS?" one headline read. Interest rates, restructuring, soft markets, debt, debt . . .

He rested the paper on the floor beside his son's narrow bed and fell headlong asleep, while drizzle flecked the windowpanes and steam ticked in the radiators. His dreams possessed that hyperreality which signifies a dip toward oblivion so deep as to be perilous; they took place in the middle distance of his past, shuttling from one self to another with marvellous speed and insouciance as electricity wandered through his brain, activating now one set of memory cells and now another. A wash of buried emotion rounded these phantoms into light and shadow, and called up tears and outcries of indignation from Fogel's phantom self; he presided above the busy lit stage of his subconscious as prompter and playwright, audience and deus ex machina as well as hero. His parents hove into view—his father a coarse man, his mother virginal in her simplicity, her narrow passion to defend as if sacred the little space her family had borrowed from the world. In their imagined vicinity, Fogel became heavy in every cell, so dense that he fell through into wakefulness, though the dream world tried to cling to his warm body, amid that unnatural ache of beginning again. The weight, the atrocious weight, of coming again to life.

His mouth felt parched, and a dribble from the downward corner of his lips had moistened the pillow. The air of the room was dusky. He did not at first know what room it was, of the many his life had occupied. A fur of shadow had grown on every surface, even that of the sleek posters. The hour was indeterminate; yet Fogel knew, instantly, that the day was still Easter. How long had he slept, so solidly? Naps were not like him. He listened for his wife's voice from their bedroom and heard nothing. He was frightened. He lay half curled up on the narrow bed like a fetus that has lost flexibility. A curve of terror chilled his abdomen, silvery and sore. Had he been the phantom self of his dreams, he would have cried out aloud with the sensation. His eyes checked the items of the room—shiny posters, vacant fireplace, light plug, bookcase of abandoned schoolbooks, rack of obsolete cassettes, stolen "No Parking" sign, stuffed rabbit wearing a vest—one by one. Everything seemed still here, yet something was immensely missing.

—John Updike

THE PHOTO ALBUM

MY wife says, "It's madness, living with a man who sticks around just because he's too lazy."

My wife always exaggerates. But it's true, I do try to avoid unnecessary trouble. I eat whatever's handy. I get my hair cut when I stop looking human. But when I do, I have it shaved; then I don't have to get another cut for three months.

Simply put, I'm reluctant to leave the house. I want to be left alone.

As a child I had a nanny. She did everything distractedly, because she was always worried about being arrested. Once when she dressed me in shorts, she shoved both my legs into one opening. I walked around like that all day. I was four. I knew that I had been dressed wrong, but I kept quiet. I didn't want to change. I still don't.

I remember many stories like that. Even as a child I was prepared to put up with all sorts of things to avoid a hassle.

I used to drink quite a bit, and, consequently, I hung out in some strange places. That made a lot of people think that I was a sociable fellow. You only had to sober me up to see my sociability vanish.

The truth is, I cannot live alone. I never remember where the electric bill is. I don't know how to iron, or do laundry. And, most important, I don't earn a lot. Ideally, I'd like to live alone, but with someone nearby.

My wife does exaggerate. "I know why you're still living with me. Shall I tell you?"

"Well, why?"

"You're just too lazy to buy a folding cot."

I could answer, "How about you? Why didn't you buy the cot? Why didn't you abandon me in our most difficult years? You, who can mend, wash, put up with people you barely know, and, most important, earn money!"

I'VE written several times before about meeting my wife, and every new version gets closer to the truth. We met about twenty-five years ago, in Leningrad. It was a February Sunday, Election Day. Block captains were going from house to house urging the residents to vote as early as possible. I was in no hurry. I had skipped voting about three times already. And not out of dissident considerations, either—rather, out of an abhorrence for meaningless acts.

The bell rang. On the doorstep stood a young woman in a fall jacket. She looked like a schoolteacher—that is, a bit of an old maid. True, she didn't have glasses on, but she was holding a notebook in her hand. She looked into the notebook and said my surname.

I said, "Come in, warm up. Have some tea." I was mortified by the look of my legs sticking out from beneath my robe. Legs are the least expressive part of the body in our family. And my robe had spots on it, too.

"Elena Borisovna," the girl said, introducing herself. "Your canvasser. You haven't voted yet." It wasn't a question but a restrained rebuke.

I repeated, "Would you like some tea?" For the sake of propriety, I added, "My mother's inside."

Mother had a headache. Which didn't keep her from calling out loudly, "Just you try eating my halvah!"

I said, "We'll have plenty of time to vote."

And here Elena Borisovna made a completely unexpected speech: "I know that these elections are pure obscenity. But what can I do? I have to take you to the polls. Otherwise, I won't be allowed to go home."

"I see," I said. "But you should be more careful. You won't get any pat on the head for talk like that."

"You can be trusted. I understood that immediately. As soon as I saw Solzhenitsyn's portrait."

"That's Dostoyevsky. But I respect Solzhenitsyn, too."

We had a modest breakfast. Mother gave us a piece of halvah after all.

Then we went outside. The houses were decorated with bunting. Candy wrappers lay in the snow. Our janitor, Grisha, was showing off his ratiné coat.

I didn't feel like voting. Not because I was lazy but because I liked Elena Borisovna, and as soon as we had all voted they would let her go home.

We went to the movies, to see "Ivan's Childhood." The film was good enough for me to patronize. At that period, I liked only detective movies—I could relax with them. But Tarkovsky's movies I praised, patronizingly—and with a hint that Tarkovsky had been waiting almost six years for a screenplay from me.

After the movie, I took Elena to the Writers' House. I was sure I'd run into somebody famous. I could count on friendly greetings from Goryshin, a drunken bear hug from Volf, a quick chat with Efimov or Konetsky. After all, I was a so-called Young

Writer. Even Granin knew my face.

There used to be many literary celebrities in Leningrad—Chukovsky, Oleynikov, Zoshchenko, Kharms, and so on. After the war, their number decreased sharply. Some died for one reason or another, some moved to Moscow.

We went upstairs to the restaurant. We ordered wine, sandwiches, pastries. I planned to order an omelette, but changed my mind. My big brother always told me, "You don't know how to eat colored food." I counted my money without taking my hand from my pocket.

The room was empty. The much-decorated Reshetov sat by the door, reading a book. He was so deeply engrossed that it had to be one of his own novels. I was ready to bet it was "I'm Coming to You, the People!"

We drank. I recounted three Yevtushenko anecdotes that had occurred literally before my very eyes. But no celebrities turned up, though there was a steady increase in customers. The belletrist Goryansky made his way to the window, his artificial leg creaking. The poets Chikin and Steinberg were at the bar. Chikin was saying, "You're great at philosophical digressions, Borya."

"And you, Dima, you're great at interior monologues," Steinberg responded.

Neither Chikin nor Steinberg could be classified as a celebrity. Goryansky was famous for strangling a guard in a German concentration camp.

The semi-famous critic Khalupovich walked by. He stared at me a long time and then said, "Oh, excuse me. I thought you were Lev Melinder."

We ordered a couple of brandies. I was running out of money, and still there were no celebrities. It looked as if Elena Borisovna would never learn that I was an up-and-coming writer.

And then Danchkovsky looked in. In a pinch, he could be called famous.

Once upon a time, two brothers came from Shklov to Leningrad. Saveli and Leonid Danchikovsky tried their wings in literature—they wrote songs, jingles, skits. First they wrote together, then each went it alone. A year later, their paths separated even more drastically: Leonid shortened his name to Danch, but he remained a Jew. Saveli changed his name by only a letter—to Danchkovsky—and turned into a Russian Pole. When the campaign against "cosmopolites" began, Leonid went to prison; Saveli graduated from the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. He published articles in the big journals, then a book; the critics began talking about him. In time, he began to produce Leninorrhea: he turned out "Volodya's Childhood," then "A Boy from Simbirsk," then the two-volume opus "Fiery Youth," and he topped that off with the trilogy "Arise, Ye Pris'ners of Starvation." When he'd exhausted Lenin's biography, he started on related themes: "Lenin and Children," "Lenin and Music," "Lenin and Art," "Lenin and Agriculture." All the books were translated into many languages. Danchkovsky grew rich; he was awarded a medal of honor. Meanwhile, his brother was awarded a rehabilitation, posthumously.

Danchkovsky knew me well, since he had been head of our Writers' Union chapter for the past year. And here he was in the restaurant.

I lowered my voice and whispered to Elena Borisovna, "Look—Danchkovsky himself! Wild success . . . sure to get the Lenin Prize."

Danchkovsky headed for the corner farthest from the jukebox. As he passed us, he slowed down. I raised my glass familiarly.

Danchkovsky, without a greeting, said clearly, "I read your humor piece in *Aurora*. It's crap."

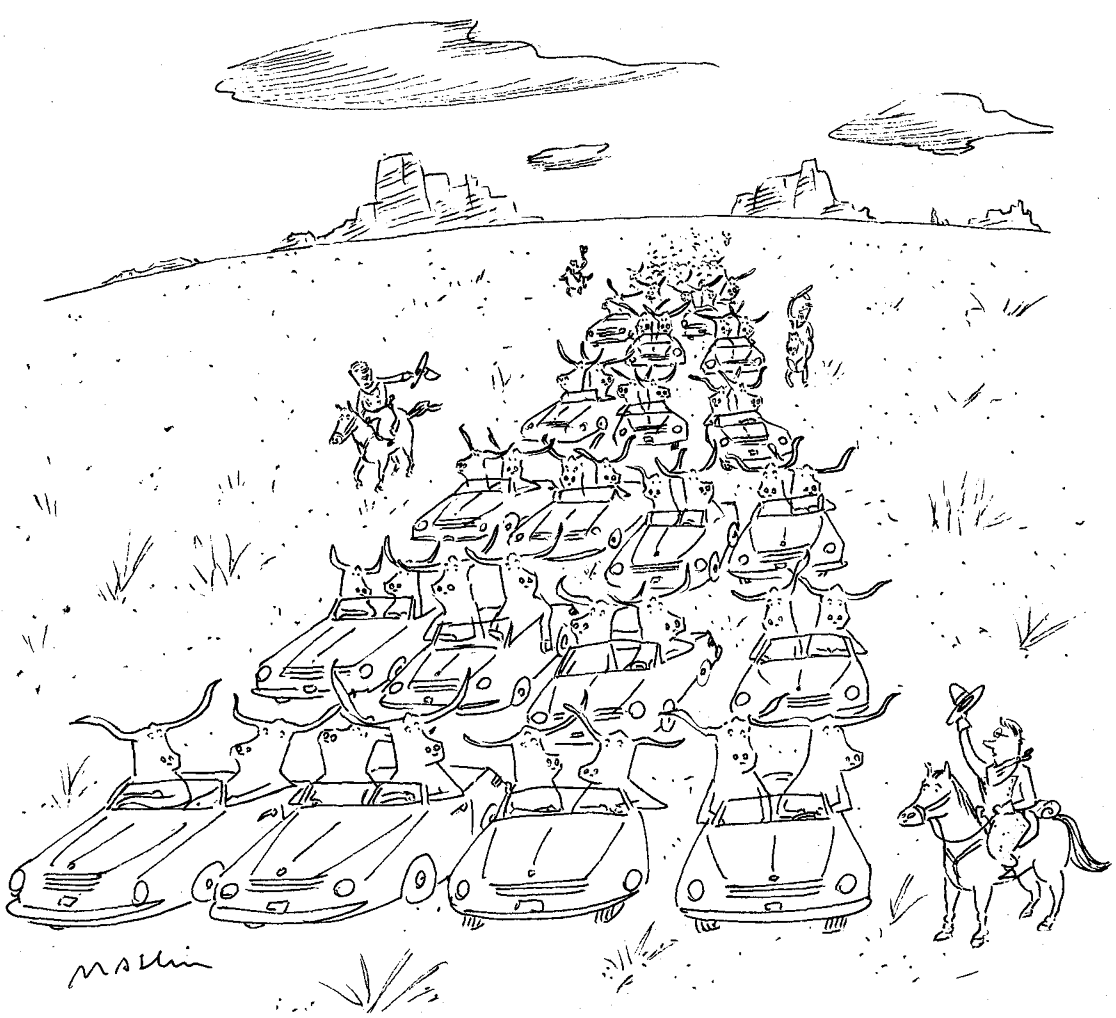
We stayed in the restaurant until eleven. The polling place had closed. Then the restaurant closed. My mother was home with her headache; we went for a stroll along the Fontanka embankment.

Elena Borisovna forgot about the polls, neglected her duties. As it turned out, she never even got around to voting herself. And for what? For the sake of an unclear relationship with a man who wrote unsuccessful humor pieces.

Finally, figuring that Mother was asleep by now, I turned home. I didn't even say, "Come with me," to Elena Borisovna. I didn't even take her by the hand. We simply found ourselves at home. That was twenty-five years ago.

Elena Borisovna astonished me by her docility. Or not docility, exactly—more a kind of indifference to the realities of life, as if everything that happened were no more than a flicker

DOLORES! TAP IS BACK!
I DIDN'T KNOW IT HAD EVER LEFT.
Leo Cullum



"Move 'em out!"

on a screen. Changes of scene, faces, voices, good and evil hurried by, while my companion, with an occasional glance toward the screen, had her mind on more important things. I don't remember Lena ever arguing, or disagreeing. I doubt if she ever once said a confident, resounding "Yes" or a firm, severe "No."

I didn't vote that night, either, of course; I also neglected my civic duty. But I'm a special case. Are we alike, then? I at least have a stimulus, a goal, an illusion, a hope. What does she have? Only our daughter, and indifference. We have twenty-five years of marriage behind us—twenty-five years of mutual isolation and indifference to real life. In those twenty-five years, our friends fell in love, married, and divorced. They wrote poems and novels about it all. They moved from one republic to another; they changed jobs, convictions, habits, became dissidents and alcoholics, tried to kill others or themselves. Marvellous, mysterious worlds arose and collapsed with a roar all around us. Like taut strings, human relations snapped. Our friends were reborn and died in the search for happiness.

And we? We faced all the temptations and horrors of life with our only gift—indifference. What is more solid than a castle built on sand? What is more durable and dependable in family life than mutual lack of character? What could be stabler than two hostile states each incapable of defending itself?

I WORKED at a large newspaper. My salary was around a hundred rubles a month, plus a few negligible raises—I remember an increase of four rubles a month "for mastering more modern methods of management."

Like most journalists, I dreamed of writing a novel. And, unlike most journalists, I actually worked at literature. But my manuscripts were rejected by the most progressive journals.

Now I can only be glad. Thanks to the censors, my apprenticeship dragged on for seventeen years. The stories I had wanted to publish in those years seem absolutely hopeless now. One was actually called "Faina's Fate."

A woman can do three things for a Russian writer. She can feed him; she can sincerely believe in his genius; she can leave him alone. By the way, the third does not preclude the second and first.

Lena didn't read my stories. I'm not even sure she had a good idea of where I worked. She did know that I wrote.

I knew approximately as much about her.

At first my wife worked in a beauty shop. After the business with the elections, she was fired. She became a proofreader. Then, to my surprise, she graduated from a printing institute. She began working at some sports publication, I think. She made twice my salary.

It's hard to understand what kept us together. Our conversations were mostly on household business. We each had our own set of friends. We even read different books: my wife would just pick up the nearest book and read from wherever it opened. That used to anger me. Then I realized that she always ended up reading good books, whereas I—if I open a book at random, it's sure to be "Plowing Virgin Soil."

What bound us together? How are human ties formed, anyway? It's not a simple question. For instance, I have three cousins. One I love, the second I can take or leave alone, and the third I barely know.

And so we lived, side by side

but separately. On rare occasions we'd exchange presents. Sometimes I'd say, "I ought to give you flowers, for the hell of it." Lena would reply, "I have everything I need."

I didn't expect gifts, either. It suited me fine. I knew one family—the husband worked from morning till night; the wife watched TV and shopped. She'd say things like "I bought Marik a birthday present. Velvet curtains. Gorgeous!"

For four years we lived like this. Then our daughter, Katya, was born. There was unexpected seriousness about it and a sense of the miraculous: we had been two, and suddenly there was another person—cranky, noisy, demanding care.

We didn't exactly raise our daughter, we merely loved her.

But the point is, after our daughter's birth it became clear that we were married. Katya acted as our marriage certificate.

I remember going to the *Aurora* editorial offices one day with the baby in her carriage. I was picking up a small fee. The clerk opened a file and said, "Sign here." She added, "We deducted sixteen rubles because you have no children."

"But I have a daughter," I said.

"You have to present the appropriate document."

"Here." I took the pink bundle out of the carriage and set it carefully on the chief accountant's desk. I gained sixteen rubles that way.

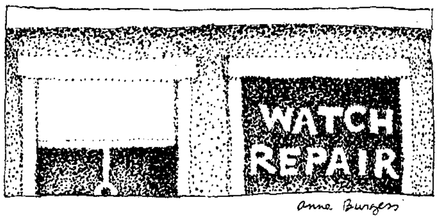
My relations with my wife did not change. Or almost not. Now we had a common concern along with our common indifference. For instance, we would bathe our daughter together.

ONCE, Lena was at work and I was held up at home. As usual, I was looking for some important papers—I think a copy of some editorial contract.

I dug around in the chests, yanked out the desk drawers. I even looked into the night table. There, under a pile of books, magazines, and old letters, I found an album. A small, almost pocket-sized album for photographs—about fifteen sheets of thick cardboard, with a dove embossed on the cover.

I opened it. The early photographs were yellowed and cracked. Some were missing corners. In one, a round-faced little girl was cautiously petting a shaggy dog with its ears back. In another, a girl of about six hugged a homemade doll. Both looked sad and lost.

Next was a family photo—mother, father, and daughter. The father was wearing a long raincoat and a straw hat. Just the tips of his fingers showed below the sleeves. His wife wore a warm sweater with puff sleeves, and she had curls tucked into a sheer kerchief. The girl had turned sharply, so that her short fall coat flew open. Something had caught her attention outside the frame—maybe a stray dog. Behind them, through the trees, was the façade of Pushkin's lycée in Tsarskoe Selo.



Anne Burgess

Later came relatives with tight, artificial smiles: an elderly, mustachioed railroad man in uniform, a lady beside a bust of Lenin, a youth on a motorcycle. Then came a sailor, or a student. Even in the picture you could see how carefully he had shaved. A girl holding a bouquet of lilies of the valley was peering into his face.

One whole page was taken up by a glossy school photo—four rows of frightened, tense, frozen faces. Not a single cheerful child. In the center was a group of teachers: two men with medals—veterans, probably—and the class matron. She was easy to spot. The old woman was embracing two schoolgirls who wore strained smiles.

On the left in the third row was my wife. The only one not looking at the camera.

I recognized her in all the pictures:

REPARATIONS OF SPRING

For a moment I will leave the multi-
colored houses, cracked façades,
and ninety-square-foot signs
hawking and lamenting
disfigurations of steel
and an imprisoned season,
the rush of fetid rain
streaking blackened windowpanes:

I will exchange
for these shrill inflections
the low turns of the bay tide,
deflect with a numb hand its course
across the sand and the roan
mutations of the sand.

Before the chatter of late-
March light increasing,
the eloquence of winter
falters, the hues like worthless
bills fall about its feet.
In the shifting firmness

of the afternoon a horseshoe crab
claws the beach and washes out
to sea without its shell.
The sphere half hidden in a moment
reëmerges a fallen mercenary
hollow from the breast down.

For a moment in late March
the currency adopts the standard
of the meadow's rough fringe—
in the crab shell, and the oak leaf—
something the color of brownstone
burnished in the rain.

A slow salt stench rises
off the catholic undergrowth
at the froth's edge;
at some distance I hear
the clattering of coins,
the call of trades begin,

and, mistaking perhaps
the intonations, I can
imagine brownstone
being had for crab shell,
caution for creation,
the coarseness of the
meadow for its
reflection in your eye.

For a moment on a broad shore
I will watch the current spring
approach with still another:
the young lie with the old,
the green linger with the rust,
avenue and ocean share,
in the lower ranges
of your laughter,
this same frenzied barter,
this momentary hour.

—REVAN SCHENDLER

• •

in a small shot of a group of skiers; in a microscopic snap taken near a kolkhoz library; even in an overexposed group portrait of a crowd of barely visible members of a youth choir.

I recognized the grim girl with worn shoes. The embarrassed young lady in a cheap bathing suit under a florid sign saying "City of Yevpatoriya." The student in a head scarf near that kolkhoz library. And everywhere my wife seemed the most unhappy.

I turned a few more pages. I saw a young man in a worker's cap, an old woman shielding her face, an unknown ballerina.

There was a picture of the actor Yakovlev, a postcard. Below, in a calligraphic hand, a fellow named Rafik Abdulayev had written, "Lena! Art demands the whole man, with nothing to spare."

I turned to the last page, and I caught my breath. I don't know why I was so surprised. I felt my cheeks turn red.

I saw a square photograph a bit larger than a postage stamp: a narrow brow, neglected beard, the face of a seedy matador. It was a picture of me. From last year's I.D. card, I think—I could make out traces of the seal on the white edge.

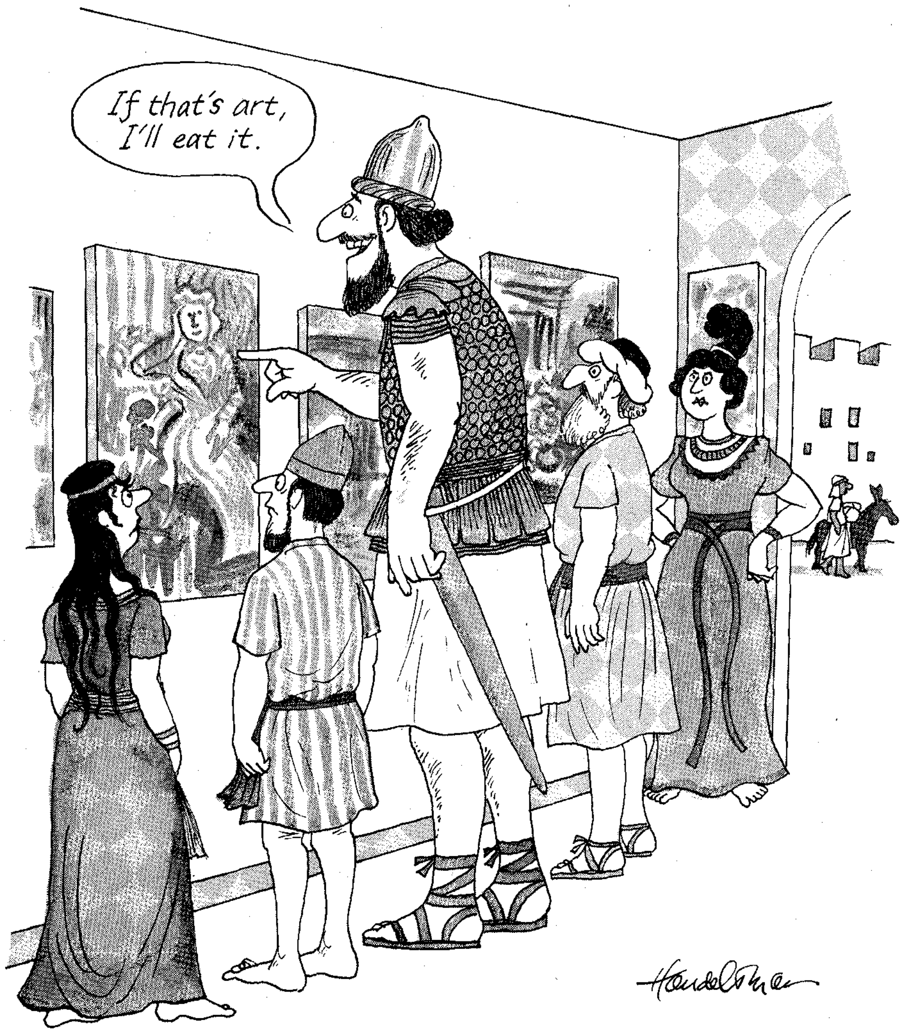
I sat without moving for about three minutes. The clock ticked in the foyer. A compressor clacked outside. I heard the elevator creaking. And I just sat.

Yet if you think about it, what had actually happened? Nothing much: a wife put a picture of her husband in a photo album. That's normal.

But I was morbidly agitated. It was hard for me to concentrate, to understand the cause. I saw that everything going on in our lives was for real. If I was feeling that for the first time only now, then how much love had been lost over the long years?

I didn't have the strength to think it through. I never knew that love could be so strong and so sharp. I thought, My hands are shaking now—how will I be later?

I got my coat and went to work.


If that's art, I'll eat it.

Goliath, the World's Biggest Philistine, at the Gath Art Gallery

• •

ABOUT six years passed, and emigration began. Jews started talking about their historic homeland. Before, all a real man needed was a sheepskin jacket and a Ph.D. Now you had to have an Israeli visa, too. Every intellectual dreamed of one, even if he had no intention of emigrating. Just to have one, just in case.

First, real Jews left. They were followed by citizens of less certain extraction. A year after that, Russians were let out. Among them a friend of ours, an Orthodox priest, left on Israeli papers.

My wife decided to emigrate. I decided to stay.

It's hard to say why I did. It was as though I hadn't yet reached some important point, as though there were still some vague possibilities I wanted to explore. Or maybe I had unconscious yearnings for repression. That happens: no Russian intellectual who hasn't been in prison is worth a damn.

I was astonished by Lena's determination. She had always seemed dependent and docile—and suddenly she makes such a grave, definitive decision.

She acquired foreign documents with red seals. She was visited by stern, bearded refuseniks who left instructions on cigarette paper and looked at me suspiciously. Katya gave away her collections of candy wrappers and stamps to her girlfriends. All that remained was to buy the plane tickets.

My mother wept. Lena was engulfed in hassles. I receded into the background. I hadn't exactly blocked her view of the horizon before, but now she had no time for me at all.

And Lena went for the tickets. She came back with a box. She walked up to me and said, "I had some money left over. This is for you."

Inside the box was an imported poplin shirt. Made in Rumania, I noticed.

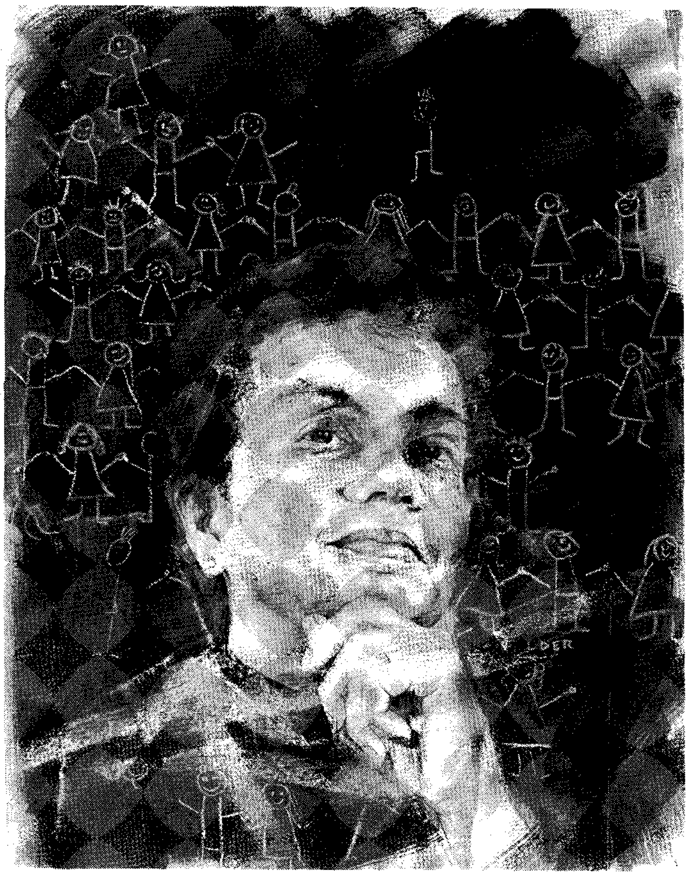
"Well," I said, "thanks." It was a decent shirt—simple, good quality. Long live Comrade Ceauşescu!

But where would I go in it? Really, where? —SERGEI DOVLATOV

(*Translated, from the Russian, by Antonina W. Bouis.*)

PROFILES

A SENSE OF URGENCY



FRIENDS and well-wishers often tell Marian Wright Edelman that she talks too fast. Addressing an audience, she will start off fairly deliberately, making an effort to pace herself and to remember about pauses, but sooner or later the urgency of her subject gets the upper hand, and the words come pouring out—facts, statistics, and moral imperatives mixed together in an eloquent barrage that leaves her listeners feeling somewhat overwhelmed. Reporters have a hard time keeping up with her. Her message is always clear, however, and the rapid-fire delivery has never seemed to interfere with her effectiveness on Capitol Hill, where she is well known as the leading advocate for children's rights. This is an emotional issue, to be sure, and she makes good use of the wide range of feelings that it evokes. On the other hand, Marian Edelman and the Washington-based organization she heads, the Children's Defense Fund, have gained an enviable reputation over the years for political astuteness and tactical skill in the hardheaded, highly competitive long-range process of influencing social policy and legislation. "She has built up a major American institution that is sui generis," her friend Robert Coles, the child psychiatrist, says. "Of course, this country has always been fascinated by children, because of its own youthfulness and hopefulness. But she educates us about them. She organizes a body of knowledge—statistical, investigative, observational, and analytic—and she puts it together in astonishing ways. One of the major achievements of the Children's Defense Fund is its documentation. There's a faith in knowledge there, a John Milton kind of faith that the truth will somehow prevail, and so they are constantly educating us."

This particular education process has been going on for fifteen years now, and the message, it appears, is finally getting through. One of the few social issues to emerge with any clarity from the farrago of smears and disinformation that characterized the 1988 Presidential campaign was a widespread national concern about child care. Even George Bush, who had never shown any public interest in the subject before, came up with a two-billion-two-hundred-million-dollar child-care proposal, which startled his right-wing supporters; in doing so, he neatly appropriated an issue that many people thought Michael Dukakis should have sewn up for the Democrats. Child care and child health figured prominently in the campaign rhetoric in dozens of state and local races, and investment in the needs of young children was a major priority in half the gubernatorial contests. "This has become the year of the child," William Harris, the president of a political-action committee called Kidspac, said last spring. "The politicians are coming aboard the ark in droves." New York's Governor Mario Cuomo went further, and declared this "the decade of the child." Politicians do not operate in vacuums. The rhetoric was inspired by intense pressure from a lot of different sources—social activists, church groups, labor unions, corporations, educational alliances, and private citizens, all of whom have come to feel that this country is letting far too many of its children go down the drain.

That a great many American children are in trouble today is beyond dispute. Twelve and a half million of them—one-fifth of the total—live in poverty, according to the most recent census figures. The United States now ranks behind Spain, Ireland, and fifteen other countries in the rate of deaths within the first year of life. Lisa Steinberg's horrifying death has focussed attention on child abuse, and this may make it easier to do something about the vast increase in reported cases of child abuse and child neglect in this country during the last decade. The problem of teen-age pregnancy, however, virtually condemns half a million new babies a year to the dismal cycle of poverty and neglect. The Children's Defense Fund has not been alone in addressing these issues, but it is certainly the most active advocate for children nationally. Last year, the Fund put together a coalition of a hundred and seventy national and local organizations in support of the Act for Better Child Care, or A.B.C., as it came to be known—an ambitious piece of social legislation that sought an initial outlay of two and a half billion dollars in new federal spending. The bill was co-sponsored by thirty-eight senators and a hundred and seventy-two representatives—a degree of bipartisan support which made its passage seem a distinct possibility, even in an election year when the federal deficit was the overriding national concern. It was defeated on a procedural vote in the Senate, before Congress had a chance to consider it on its merits, but the bill has been reintroduced in the 101st Congress, and its partisans are confident that this time some major child-care legislation will be passed.

Spending federal funds for outside-the-home child care—or “day care,” as it is often called—is a controversial issue. Right-wing ideologues like Phyllis Schafly argue that A.B.C. would “Sovietize the American family” and allow the government to tell people how to raise their children. “They claim we are destroying the family because we are encouraging mothers to go out and work, and we say, ‘Listen, they’re already out there,’ ” Edelman has said. “Sixty per cent of the mothers of young children are working, and they’re doing so because they have to. A 1985 report by the Congressional Joint Economic Committee found that a whole lot more two-parent families would live below the poverty line if the wives weren’t working—fifty per cent more, in fact. In addition, a quarter of today’s working mothers are raising their children alone, forty per cent of them with no child support of any kind. You’ve got to deal with that reality. The right wing says we’re discriminating against mothers who sacrifice their standard of living in order to stay home with their kids. That’s a tougher issue, I must say. Bush and others talk about playing with the tax system and giving incentives to mothers to stay at home; now, if they’re talking enough money I might make a deal with them. I’m for mothers’ having the choice to stay home. If they want to talk turkey about family-support programs or children’s allowances— But of course nobody wants to spend the money. And the right-wingers don’t pay any attention to the facts. It’s pure ideology. They lie, they say absolutely anything, and they have some very powerful slogans. It’s hard to fight those myths—to get people to understand, for example, that most of the poor people in this country are not on welfare, that they get no support at all.”

On the issue of child care, ideology has been overwhelmed by demographics. By 1995, according to current projections, the mothers of two-thirds of all our preschoolers (that is, of some fifteen million of them) will have jobs outside the home. The need to expand and improve child-care facilities is so obvious and so pressing that a politician argues against it at his peril, and not many do. Orrin Hatch, the highly conservative Republican senator from Utah, introduced a child-care bill of his own in the last Congress; it called for much less money than A.B.C. did, and it demanded strict local control over how the funds were spent, but, as Edelman points out, the very fact that Orrin Hatch wanted federal funds for child care effectively demolished the right-wing argument that this was wrong on principle.

The huge shift of women into the work force has also gone a long way toward changing people’s perceptions of the child-care issue as something that applies mainly to poor people and blacks. Over the last few years, it has become a white, middle-class issue as well, and, accordingly, a great deal of the pressure on politicians comes from white, middle-class groups. It can be argued that the issue here is not so much what’s good for children as what’s good for their parents. “I am prepared to join the conservatives and to say that it is a tragedy that children are spending more and more time in day-care centers and less and less time with their parents,” Robert Coles said recently. “I would be tremendously impressed and moved if American conservatives would put their money where they claim their beliefs are, and say we’re going to make it possible for women who want to to stay home with their children.” But Coles agrees with Marian Edelman that reality is what must be dealt with. Hundreds of thousands of young children spend their days in makeshift and inadequate surroundings because their parents cannot afford to enroll them in well-run day-care programs, and well-run programs are in such short supply that most of them have long waiting lists.

“We sat glued to our television sets for three days when Jessica McClure fell down that open well shaft, but we missed the point,” Edelman told members of the Democratic Platform Committee last May. “She should never have fallen down that well shaft in the first place. She was in an unregulated day-care center, with one person trying to take care of nine children.” The Act for Better Child Care places major emphasis on health and safety standards in federally supported programs. While the bill covers a diverse range of providers (churches, family day-care homes, community-run centers, and private operators), it also seeks to establish minimum requirements for the ratio of staff to children and for the training of “caregivers,” as the staff members are now being called. Edelman had anticipated that the standards issue would be the toughest to put across, because it would be seen by conservatives as prime evidence of “the government telling us how to raise our kids.” What she had not anticipated was a church-state controversy that boiled up just as the bill was about to be introduced in Congress. That controversy held the bill up for two months, and it was almost certainly a factor in the Democratic leadership’s unwillingness, in the waning hours of the 100th Congress, to bring the bill to the floor for a vote.

“Politicians do not have a lot of courage,” Edelman told me last fall, soon after the bill went down. “Both parties used the bill as a political plaything. On the other hand, child care is now a front-rank issue, and we have a much clearer idea who our friends are—and our enemies.” She seemed resigned yet buoyant in the aftermath of the often bruising, yearlong fight for A.B.C. A vibrant, light-skinned black woman of forty-nine, Edelman rarely fails to savor the irony of a political event, and her rapid conversation is leavened by frequent wellings up of spontaneous laughter.

We were sitting in the library of her comfortable old house in the Cleveland Park section of Washington, where she and her husband, Peter Edelman, and their three sons—Joshua, Jonah, and Ezra—have lived since 1979. The house is full of books and athletic equipment. In a city whose inhabitants put in notoriously long hours on the job, Marian and Peter Edelman, who teaches at the Georgetown University Law Center, are known as exception-

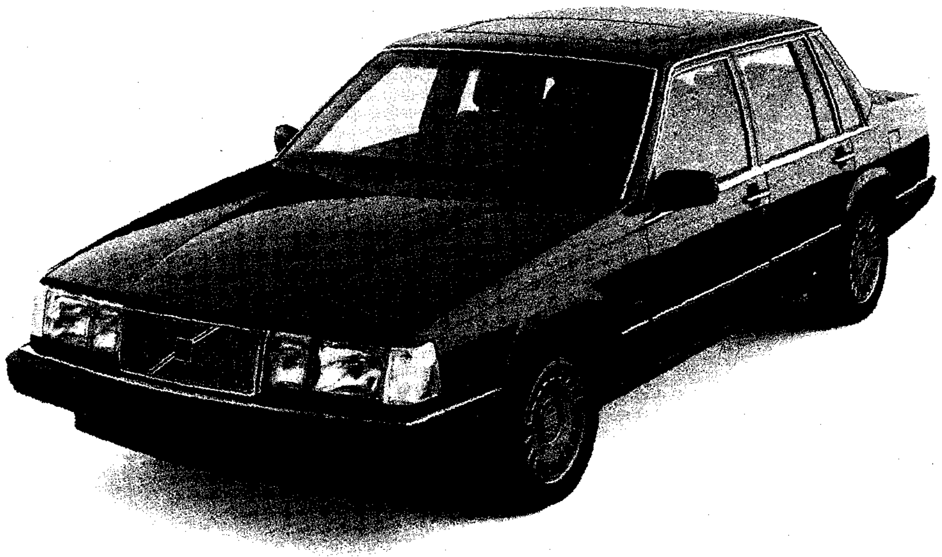
"Who has pink eyes, long ears, a cute little cotton tail, and brings baskets of eggs on Easter morning?"

ally hard workers, but they have always managed to spend a lot of time with their sons. Last summer was the first in many years that they failed to take a two- or three-week family vacation on Martha's Vineyard; after two days there, Marian had to come back to Washington to do battle for the A.B.C. bill. Now and then, Marian talks a little wistfully about the things she would like to do if she had more free time. Looking at paintings is one of her passions, and she regrets having missed both the Gauguin and the Georgia O'Keeffe shows at the National Gallery last year. The Edelmans do not entertain as much as they'd like, although they both know a great many people in Washington; when they do have friends in for dinner, the evening usually turns into an informal seminar on some current political or social issue. Marian keeps herself phenomenally well informed. "She reads all the time," Peter told me. "In the bathtub, in bed, everywhere. Mostly policy stuff, but also books on religion and philosophy. Sometimes she reads junk—Robert Ludlum, Helen MacInnes novels, and that sort of thing. She's also a great breakfast enthusiast; she's there at the table while everyone else comes through." The fact that Peter Edelman is white and Marian is black does not really register at all in this house. They both say they have devoted much less time to thinking about that than to trying to give their sons as much as possible of their different religious backgrounds—Jewish in his case, Baptist in hers. Each boy, in due time, has had what the Edelmans call his "Baptist Bar Mitzvah," in a ceremony attended by members of both extended families as well as close friends. None of the boys ever seemed to think there was anything out of the ordinary about their family, and all three have done very well in school. At the moment, Joshua is a student at Harvard, Jonah is at Yale, and Ezra is in the ninth grade at Sidwell Friends School, in Washington.

• •

ROGER WILKINS, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and a former Assistant Attorney General in the Johnson Administration, told me a story about a meeting he had with Marian Edelman in the early nineteen-seventies. "I had just left the Justice Department and gone to the Ford Foundation, and she was just starting what would become the Children's Defense Fund," he said. "She came to see me. We were old friends, and naturally I thought she was going to ask for funding. She told me about this organization she was starting, and I thought it reflected a lot of solid thinking, as I told her. Then she said, 'Well, now, Roger, I want to step down and let you run it.' I said, 'Marian, I don't understand.' She said, 'Among other things our children need, they need the image of a strong black man running things, changing the course of events.' She really meant it. She had invented this organization, and now she was ready to let somebody else take all the credit. Well, I declined, but it was one of the most remarkable conversations I've ever had."

The strong black man in Marian's life was her father, Arthur Jerome Wright. As a young Baptist preacher in the rural South, Wright had once heard Booker T. Washington speak, and the speech made a tremendous impression on him. Like Washington, Wright became an exponent of black people's helping themselves—pulling themselves up, getting an education, buying land, starting small businesses. He believed even more strongly, though, in each person's Christian duty to help others. For Marian Wright, growing up in the small town of Bennettsville, South Carolina, where her father was the minister of Shiloh Baptist Church, the two most



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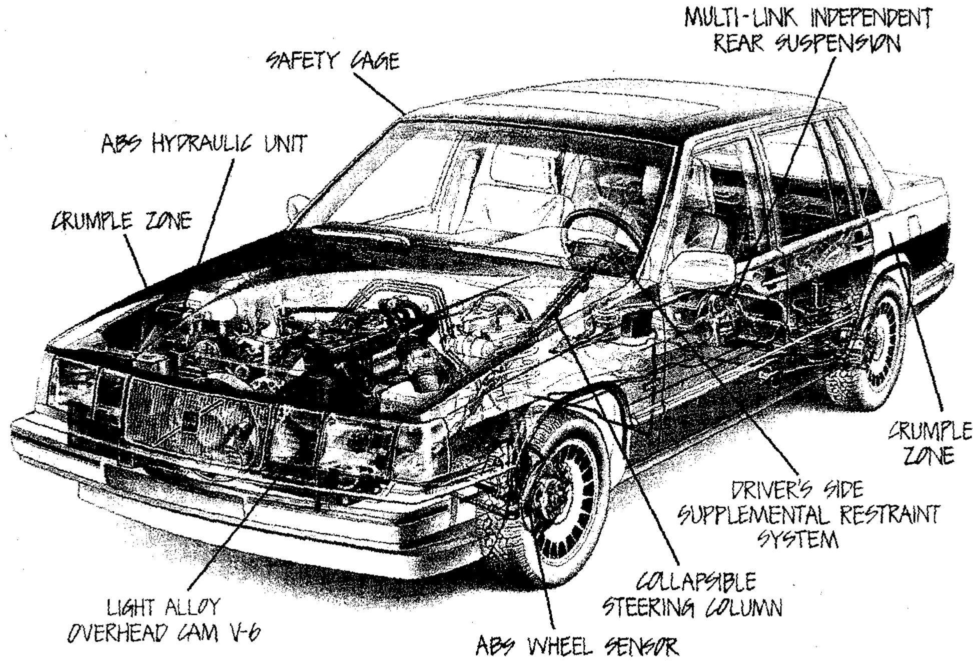

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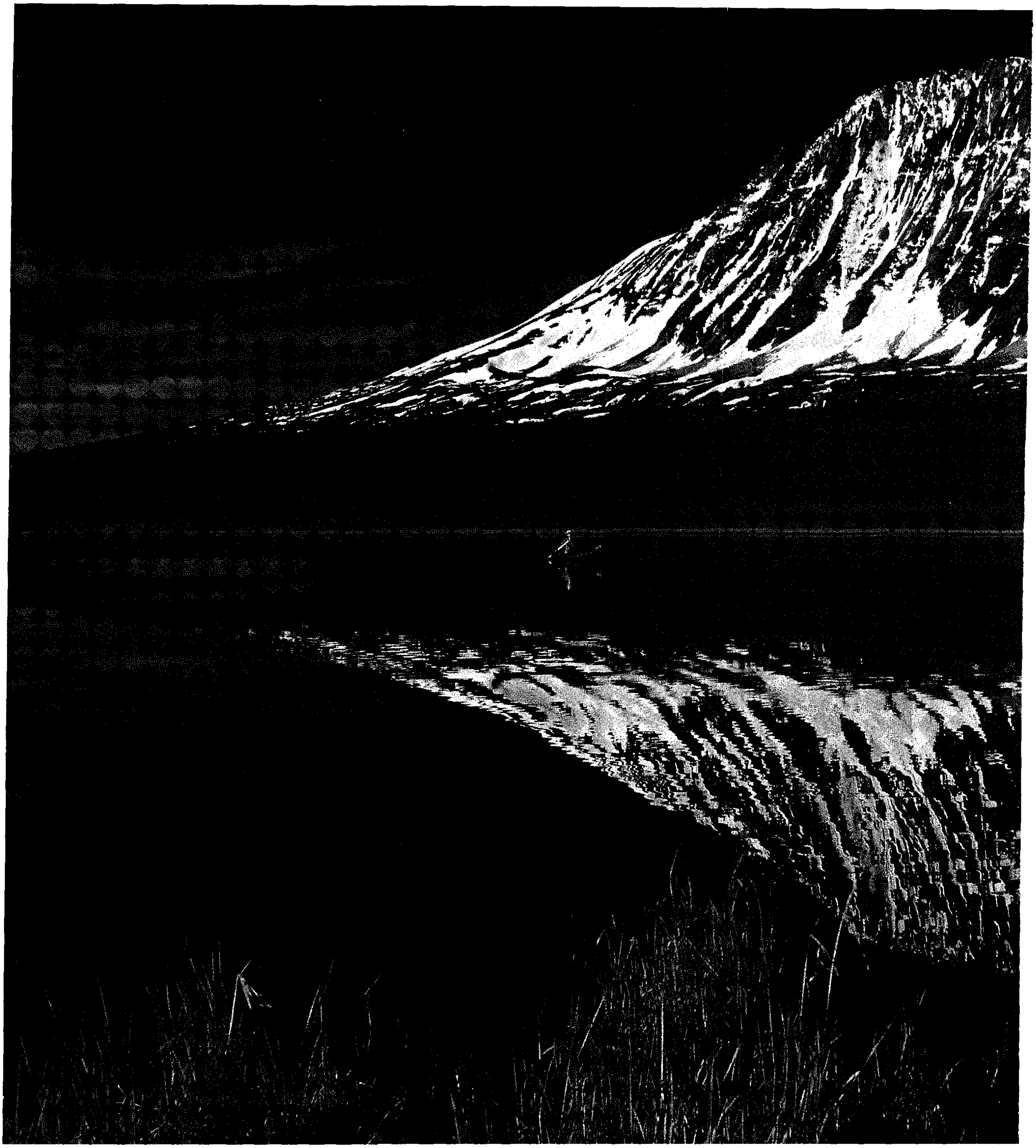

Time to reflect as Mount Wilson looks on, Nahanni Country.

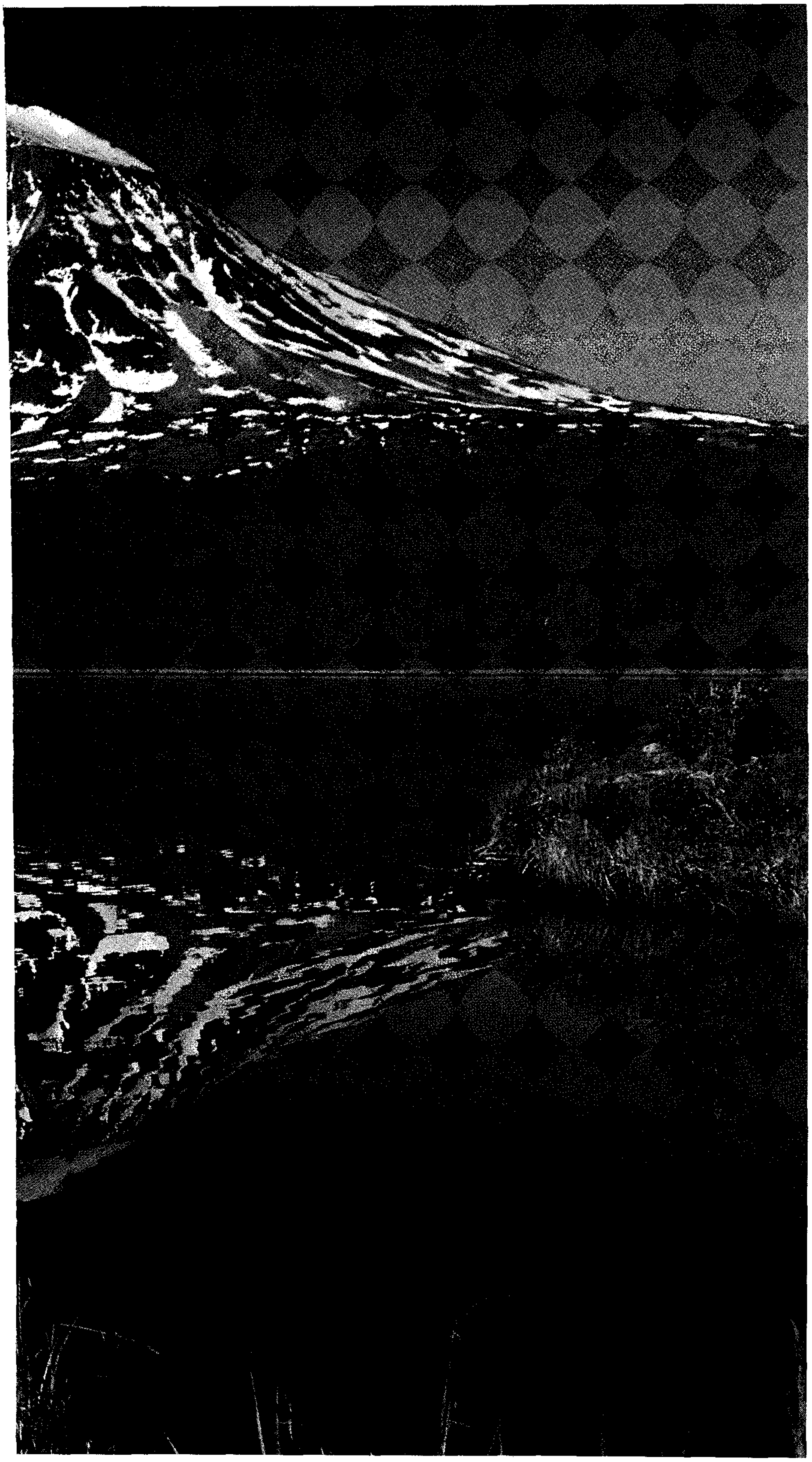

Photo by Pat and Rosemarie Keough.

The sun gradually ascends and the veil of the morning mist lifts. Plateaus sprawl. Mountains stretch. Life wakes. And the scene is set.

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CANADA'S NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Within reach, yet beyond belief

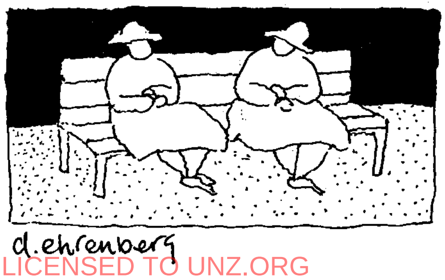
important expectations were getting an education and giving service. "The only bad thing about that is that none of us learned how to relax," she recalls. "Working for the community was as much a part of our existence as eating and sleeping and church."

Marian was born in 1939, the youngest of five children. She came as something of a surprise to the other children—a girl and three boys. Her next-oldest brother, Julian, who was six at the time, never quite forgave her for displacing him as the baby of the family. Parental discipline had relaxed a little by the time she arrived, but the requirements were unchanged. She was expected to take part in chores and community service, and to attend the nightly study hour around the dining table. "From six-thirty to seven-thirty, we had to sit at the table and act like we were studying," her brother Harry recalls. "If you said the teacher hadn't assigned you anything, Daddy would say, 'Well, assign yourself.' It was just read, read, read." As a young child, Marian could sometimes get around her parents by crying—something that none of the others had been able to do. The older children made use of this. If they wanted to go to the local movie house on a school night, for example, they would marshal all the available arguments in favor of the idea, claiming that the movie was educational, uplifting, etc., and then, if none of those succeeded, they would instruct Marian to cry. Now and then, it worked.

Bennettsville was a typical Southern town, which is to say that it was segregated. There was a black school, but there were no recreational facilities for black children until Arthur Wright went out and built them: he organized the local community to make a playground behind the church (with a small merry-go-round) and to improvise a roller-skating rink. He tried to build a swimming pool as well, but the money to finish it never came in. The minister also established the Wright Home for the Aged, and his wife, Maggie Leola Bowen Wright, ran it. She was a quiet, resourceful woman, whose strength the children never fully appreciated until their father died. "Their marriage was a real partnership," Marian says. "She was absolutely the organizer—she kept the books, raised the money, did what was necessary. I don't think my dad ever made more than two hundred dollars a month, but none of us ever felt poor, and compared to the people around us we weren't."

Both parents were sensitive to the individual needs and responses of the five children, without being overly protective. "We were not shielded from the world," Marian recalls. "We were told that there were problems but that we could do something about them. The world outside said we were poor black kids who weren't worth much, but the family said that wasn't so, and the church said it wasn't so. Despite all the negative signals, we knew who we were. Daddy also believed in role models. I can remember sitting on a hard wooden bench for three hours in Columbia, South Carolina, to hear Mordecai Johnson, the president of Howard University. Any time a prominent Negro man or woman came anywhere within reach, we were taken to see that person." (Marian was named after Marian Anderson, whom she was taken to hear as a child.)

Arthur Wright's parents had left the South when he was young, and Arthur spent his early adult years in Philadelphia and New York. Marian is deeply thankful that he decided to go back home to South Carolina to raise his family. "We all had a sense of community, and a sense of being in that part of the country at a critical time," she says. "Life was tough, but every day's expectations were clear. I went back to my twenty-fifth high-school reunion in Bennettsville in 1981, and it was really amazing. That little old town—nearly all my classmates had done well. The message for kids when I went to school there was that you could struggle and that there was hope. The bad side was that there was a lot of exclusion, which probably has some bearing on what I do today. One of the kids I grew up with stepped on a nail when he was eleven years old, and because he couldn't get the right medical treatment he died. I remember a terrible accident near our house in the middle of the night, when a truck collided with a car. An ambulance came, but because the truck driver, who was white, wasn't injured it just drove away, even though the family in the car, who were black, were badly injured. Things like that made me wild. Across the way from our house was the white people's swimming pool. We swam in the creek. The hospital sewage ran into that creek, but it was where we swam. A boy in my class jumped off a bridge into that creek and broke his neck. Always the downside. But somehow enough of a sense of positive community developed so that a number of kids succeeded."



What the Wright children got from their parents has sustained all five of them in adult life. Olive, the firstborn, became a teacher—a highly gifted math and science teacher, who recently retired after many years in the Washington public-school system. Arthur Wright, Jr., the oldest brother, was the family rebel. He refused to go to college, and precipitated a memorable family crisis, but after a hitch in the Army he decided to go to college after all; he got his degree from North Carolina State University, and is now in charge of an alcoholic-rehabilitation center in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. The next brother, Harry, was attending Colgate Rochester Divinity School when their father died, of a heart attack, in 1954. Harry came home to Bennettsville and took his father's place as minister of Shiloh Baptist Church. In 1967, he moved, with his family, to Dallas, where he became the president of Bishop College; he is now the minister of the Cornerstone Baptist Church in Brooklyn. Julian, the third brother, elected to stay in Bennettsville. After graduating from North Carolina State, he went back there to live; he commutes to his job teaching school in Rockingham, North Carolina. Julian also runs the Wright Home for the Aged, which he took over after his mother died in 1984. All five children married, all of them have children of their own, and the families get together frequently.

"The boys in our house were never raised any differently from the girls," Marian says. "There was never any assumption that the boys would have careers and we wouldn't. When I look back, I don't know where that came from. My brothers all knew how to clean house. And when Olive decided

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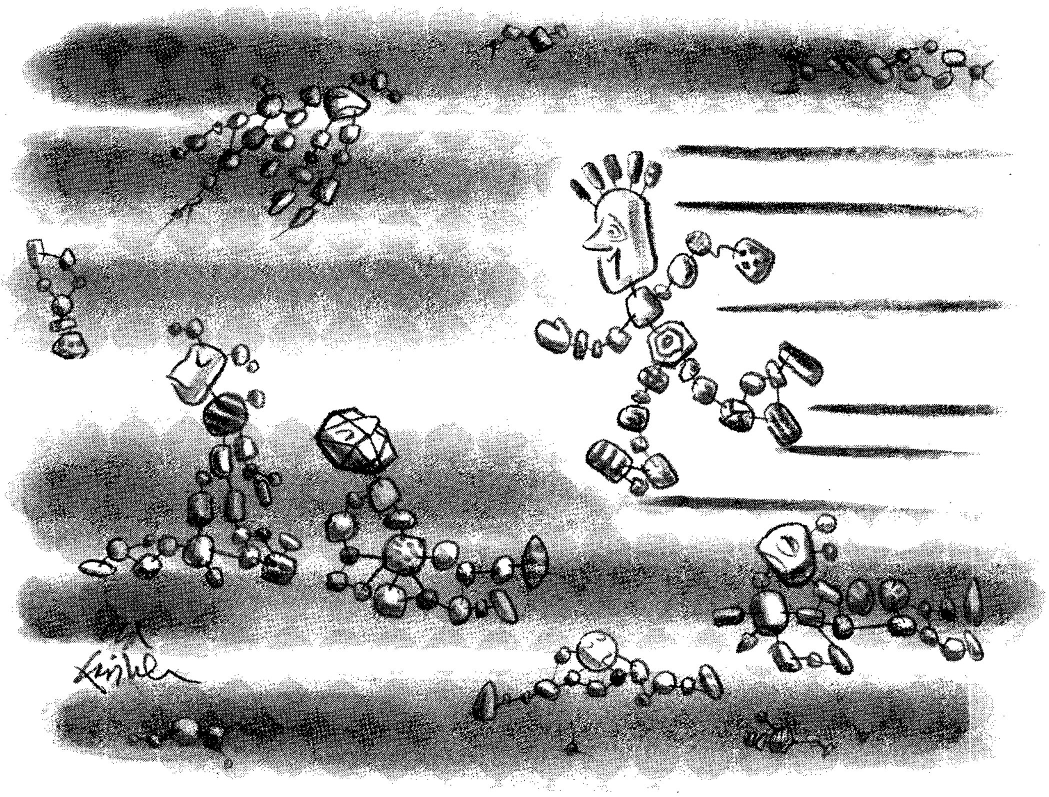


"*As an anabolic steroid, I can't help living the fast life!*"

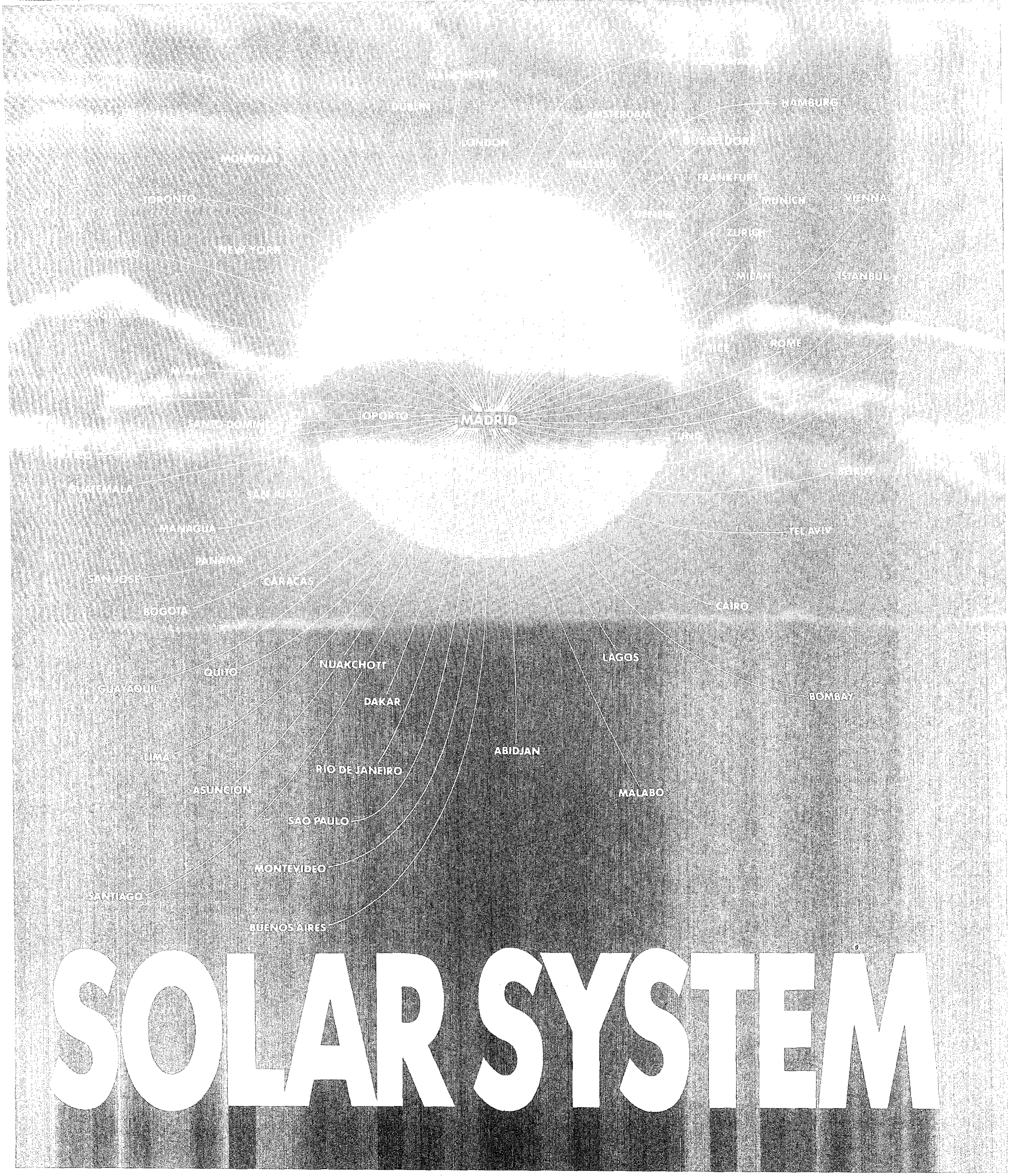
to get married three years after she graduated from Fisk University our daddy was horrified. He thought she hadn't contributed enough even though she'd been teaching school for those three years."

Marian was fourteen when their father died. She was with him at the end. "We've never been able to find out just what he said to her," Harry Wright told me, "but she was never the same afterward. It was as though she had an absolute determination to discover all her possibilities."

Within the limits of a segregated community, Marian's childhood was a normal, happy one in her eyes and in the eyes of her sister and brothers. She did well in school, and was cheerful and well liked—a slim, pretty girl who became a drum majorette in the school band. Because their mother, who played the organ in church, always wished she could have studied music in college, both the Wright daughters came under some pressure to choose musical careers. Marian took piano and voice lessons, and worked diligently at both, but without showing any evidence of exceptional talent. She loved literature—Tolstoy above all. She had looked forward to entering Fisk University, in Nashville, the rather sophisticated black school where Olive had gone, but when the time came she yielded to her mother and her brother Harry's combined wish that she attend Spelman College, in Atlanta, because it was closer to home. Spelman was a much more conservative place than Fisk. "I hated the idea of going to a staid women's college," she said, "but it turned out to be the right place for me after all."

Spelman, founded in 1881, was the nation's oldest private liberal-arts college for black women. Martin Luther King's sister taught at Spelman (she still does), and King spoke occasionally on campus. Chapel was compulsory for every student, six days a week. Spelman girls were encouraged to wear hats and gloves when they left the campus, and they had to be back by six o'clock, and in their dormitories by ten—restrictions that more or less ruled out any significant contact with the black male students at Morehouse College, whose campus was across the street. "I was a rebel my first semester," Marian told me. "But then I straightened out, because basically that wasn't me. I did very well my second semester. And then a wonderful, wonderful thing happened. Charles Merrill, who is the son of the man who founded Merrill Lynch, and who had been much impressed by some Morehouse men he met in the Army, had started a scholarship program to send one Morehouse man to Europe every year. Later he decided to extend the program to Spelman. I got a Merrill scholarship at the end of my sophomore year, to spend my junior year abroad, and that was a very big deal for a girl brought up in a little Southern town. My mother was great about it. She agreed with Howard Zinn, one of my Spelman teachers, that I should go on my own, not with a group, and I'm deeply grateful for that.

"I was enrolled in the usual French Civilization course at the Sorbonne, but I decided that that wasn't what I wanted, so I applied to the University of Geneva. By that time, I was planning to go into the foreign service after college. Anyway, I ended up spending only the first summer in Paris and the rest of the academic year in Geneva. The second summer I spent in the Soviet Union, on a Lisle Fellowship, which is something like the Experiment in International Living. I'd been dying to go to Russia ever since reading Tolstoy. Also, I had heard that W. E. B. Du Bois was living there, and I was determined to meet him. I didn't—he was somewhere else by then. But I had so many great moments there. I actually saw the famous kitchen debate between Khrushchev and Nixon, at the American National Exhibition in Moscow—I was right there, and saw it. Soon afterward, I went down to the Caucasus with a student group, and one day we made a side trip to a village near Sochi, the Black Sea resort. We were standing in the village square when three big ZIMs pulled up, and out came Khrushchev and the President of Czechoslovakia. A celebration sort of erupted around them, and vodka was passed around. To show how I was then, I had gone a whole year in France and Switzerland without touching so much as a glass of wine. So when I got to Russian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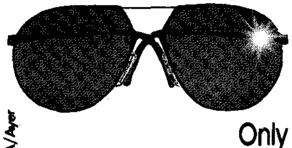

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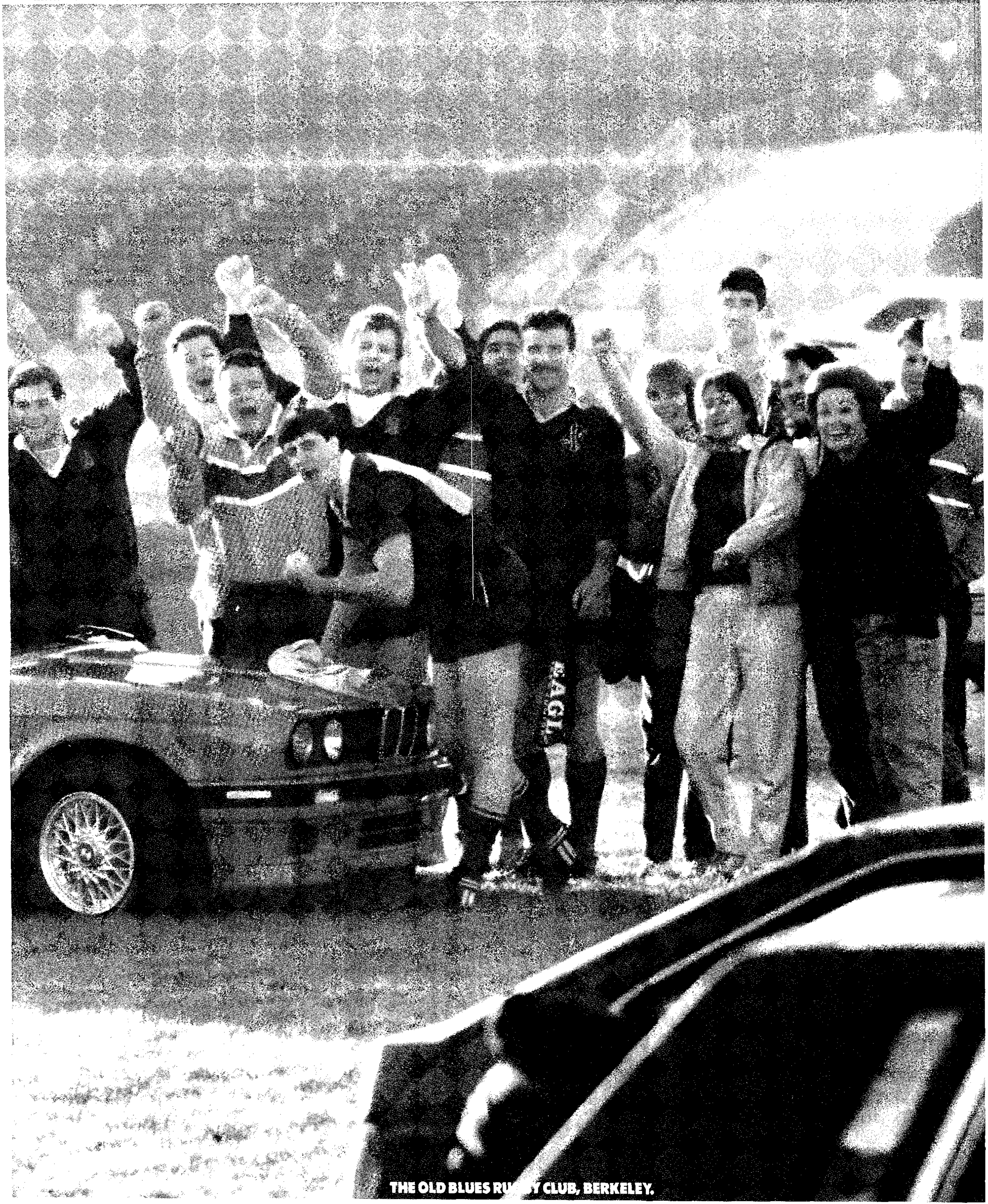
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vodka it was a very merry dose. Everything was carefully controlled, of course. There were no home visits, or anything like that, but I felt absolutely at ease with the Russian people. The Baptist church in Moscow felt just like a Baptist church at home, with the same kind of warmth and openness. That year gave me a sense of confidence that I could navigate in the world and do just about anything."

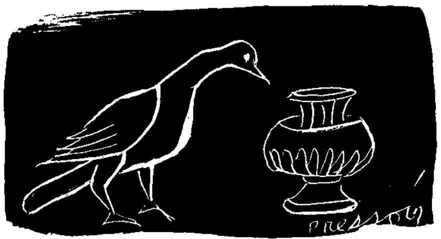
THE carefully regulated environment of Spelman College might have seemed altogether too confining to a newly fledged world navigator, but when Marian came back, in the fall of 1959, for her senior year she found a focus for her energy in the emerging civil-rights movement. It was inevitable that she would become involved in it, immediately and deeply. "When I was growing up, there was never any doubt in our minds that segregation was wrong, something to be fought against," she told me. "We talked about it all the time at home. That whole last year of my dad's life, when I was fourteen, he kept waiting for the Brown decision to come down from the Supreme Court. He died ten days before it came." Other Spelman students, too, were very much aware of the civil-rights movement. Martin Luther King was a presence on the campus, and so were a number of other movement leaders, including Whitney Young, who was then the dean of the Atlanta University School of Social Work, and Carl Holman, a teacher at Clark College, in Atlanta, who later became the head of the National Urban Coalition. Howard Zinn, a white Northerner, who was the head of Spelman's History Department when Marian was there (about a quarter of the Spelman teachers then were white), was dismissed from the faculty in 1963 because of his involvement with the students' civil-rights activities and his support of students' protests against campus restrictions. "But, like so many of the teachers in those days, I was following the students, not leading them," he told me. Zinn took a group of students, Marian included, on a class trip to the Georgia State Legislature one day in 1960. When they got there and found that the visitors' gallery was segregated, they decided on the spur of the moment to integrate it. The business of the House was interrupted, and the Speaker ordered them removed from the white section.

The sit-ins hit Atlanta in March of 1960. "That was when Marian and some others really broke out of the Spelman convent," Zinn recalls. A number of Spelman students volunteered to join a much bigger group from Morehouse and the other black colleges in Atlanta for one of the first large-scale sit-ins, at the City Hall cafeteria. Marian had posted a notice on the bulletin board of her dormitory which read, "Young ladies who can picket, please sign below." (" 'Young ladies'—that was so typical of the atmosphere of the college," Zinn says.) Everyone was given the choice of being arrested or not, and fourteen Spelman students were arrested, including Marian; she had prepared for her night in jail by taking along a copy of "The Screwtape Letters," by C. S. Lewis. "It never occurred to me not to get arrested," she said. "I called my mother beforehand and told her what I was going to do, and she didn't object, although I know she was worried."

This was Marian's first real taste of the movement, and it changed her mind about what she was going to do when she graduated. She decided that instead of doing graduate work in Russian Studies at Georgetown, as a preparation for the foreign service, she would go to law school. "I didn't think I had an aptitude for the law," she recalls, "but I wanted to be able to help black people, and the law seemed like a tool I needed." She applied to Yale Law School, was accepted, and won a John Hay Whitney Fellowship to attend. "I went through those three years hating the whole course of study," she said. "I'd had no idea what law school was going to be like, and the one thing I looked forward to during those years was never having to read cases again. But I made many good friends. There was a terrific group of black kids at Yale. We were very integrated, but we were not confused about what we wanted and what we were going to do."

Among the friends she made at Yale was Bob Moses, a soft-spoken, quietly impressive young black man who was no longer a student himself. After graduating from Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan, Moses had gone to Hamilton College, where he was co-captain of the basketball team and vice-president of the senior class, and then to Harvard for a master's degree in philosophy. He had committed himself to the civil-rights struggle in 1960. As one of the first members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, he had volunteered that summer to travel, alone, through the Deep South, recruiting blacks to come to one of S.N.C.C.'s first organizational conferences, in Atlanta. By the time Marian Wright met him, he was a field secretary of S.N.C.C., organizing in Mississippi and occasionally meeting with members of the Northern Student Movement, based at Yale. His first impression of Marian was that "she understood what a lot of people didn't then, about the importance of what was happening in Mississippi."

With its predominantly black population and its obdurate white power structure, Mississippi had until then been considered too dangerous for civil-rights workers to enter. The Ku Klux Klan had been reborn after the 1954 Brown decision outlawing segregation; many of the local police either belonged to the Klan or looked with favor on its activities, which at that time centered on identifying and eliminating black leaders. Excluded from the political process by outright intimidation as well as by the poll tax, Mississippi blacks had seemed virtually unreachable until Moses made his solo reconnaissance in 1960. The following summer, he went back to Mississippi, where for the next few years he devoted himself to the hazardous work of helping black people register to vote.



Marian Wright went to Mississippi during the spring break of her third year at law school, in 1963. She had never been to the state before. "I promised my mother I would not get into any trouble and I would not get arrested," she said. "I went to Jackson and was picked up there by Medgar Evers, and he drove me in his car up to Greenwood, which was where S.N.C.C. and other civil-rights organizations had set up an office. My first night there, we had a shooting. Somebody drove by in a car and fired some shots into the house of a local man, George Green. Of course, people were very, very frightened, but Bob, in his calm way, kept right on trying to persuade them to register. He was *the* leader in Mississippi on voter registration, and I think he is one of the truly, truly great men. I stayed there three days. The black people had all heard that a lady lawyer from up North was coming—me. They'd expected to see some well-dressed hotshot, and when I showed up in jeans I could see they were disappointed. After that, I always tried to look good.

"My last day in Greenwood, Bob took a group of people down to the courthouse to register. He walked at the head of that scraggly bunch of courageous people; I was at the end of the line, behind an old man on crutches. This was the first time I'd seen police dogs in action, and I've been scared of them ever since. If I see a German shepherd on the street, to this day I'll cross over to avoid him. The cops came with the dogs, and led them to attack us. I remember seeing a dog jump on Bob Moses and tear his pants, and then it was just a terrifying scene—people running away, Bob and the other S.N.C.C. kids getting arrested, and throwing me their car keys as they were being led off. I ran to a phone booth and called the only person I could think of to call, who was John Doar, in the Justice Department in Washington, and I can still hear his steely voice telling me, 'Just stay calm and give me the facts.' " (Doar was then deputy chief of the civil-rights division in the Justice Department.)

"I took the car keys to the S.N.C.C. office, and then I went back to the courthouse, not really knowing what I was going to do. Here I was, in my third year of law school. I'd found out that there were only three black lawyers in the state of Mississippi, and they were all in Jackson, ninety-six miles away. Outside, in front of the courthouse, was a police car with the dogs, and an unruly crowd of whites. I tried to go up the courthouse steps to check on my friends, but, of course, they wouldn't let me in. I've since heard lots of stories—people saying I was pushed down the steps by the deputy sheriff, and stuff—but it was nothing like that. They just wouldn't let me in. I went around to the side door, where I found out that they were going to try them immediately, but I never could learn the charges. They all spent several weeks in jail, until our people got the bail money together. That's really when I decided to become a lawyer."

She went back to New Haven and finished law school. That spring, the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense and Educational Fund had set up an interneship program to encourage young lawyers to work in the South. Marian Wright and Julius Chambers (who is now the head of the Fund) were the first two internes selected; they were trained for a year in New York City, and then given salaries to go and work wherever they wanted in the South. Chambers went to Charlotte, North Carolina. Marian went to Jackson, Mississippi. In the spring of 1964, she opened a legal office there to support civil-rights efforts. "My salary was seven thousand two hundred dollars a year," she told me, "and I've never saved so much money in my life."

The state required non-residents to live there for a year before applying to the Mississippi bar, so Marian was not

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able to practice law at first—not officially. She made an arrangement with the three black lawyers in town: they signed the necessary papers generated by her work, much of which had to do with getting people out of jail. There were hundreds of arrests that summer of 1964—the summer of the Mississippi Summer Project, which brought thousands of white students from Northern colleges to work on registering black voters throughout the state. It was also the summer that the project workers Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney were arrested by Deputy Sheriff Cecil Price in Neshoba County, held in jail until after dark, and then turned over by Price to the Klan. The F.B.I. found their bodies six weeks later, buried in an earth dam.

"That summer, I very seldom got a client out of jail who had not been beaten, who didn't have bones broken or teeth missing," Marian recalls. "One young boy I represented had been shot and killed in jail, and I had to take his parents to the funeral home to view the body. I took the parents in, and saw that an autopsy had been performed on him. It was another of those watershed experiences—I had nightmares for weeks, but afterward I felt I could face anything. It's amazing what you can come to accept as part of your life. Like starting up your car in the morning with the door open in case there's a bomb. Bombs were going off all the time that summer, but you learn how to deal with that fear, and with the fear of being shot at; you learn how to function in spite of it. I was beginning to learn in that first year how to get my emotions out of the way in order to function more effectively. There were some really extraordinary people down there—ladies who had been through this stuff year after year, not bitter, just doing the best they could. The absence of bitterness was always terribly striking. It reminded me of the women I grew up with in South Carolina, people who never had a choice but who led lives of great dignity and great service and great care. I was determined not to do anything that would keep me from being admitted to the bar. I can be angry, but if that gets translated into the representation I give in court, then I'm not going to be effective, I'm not going to get my client out of jail. The point was, How do you change Mississippi? My rage was very personal, and it wasn't going to change anything."

To her own surprise, Marian passed the bar exam on her first try. "I was the only black taking the exam, and they were astonishingly nice to me," she said. "Maybe they thought I had outside connections and could make trouble for them." They probably did think that. Marian Wright impressed a lot of people as mature beyond her years, and not easily intimidated. "She lacked some of the fear and shyness that a lot of black people involved with the civil-rights movement had then," I was told by Robert Coles, who met her in June, 1964, at Western College for Women, in Oxford, Ohio, where civil-rights activists and college students were preparing for the Mississippi Summer Project. "When I found out she came from Bennettsville, I was very surprised. I'd pictured her as coming from a middle-class Northern black family. She knew how to use the political and social structure of the nation to protect her. But, you know, there's still about

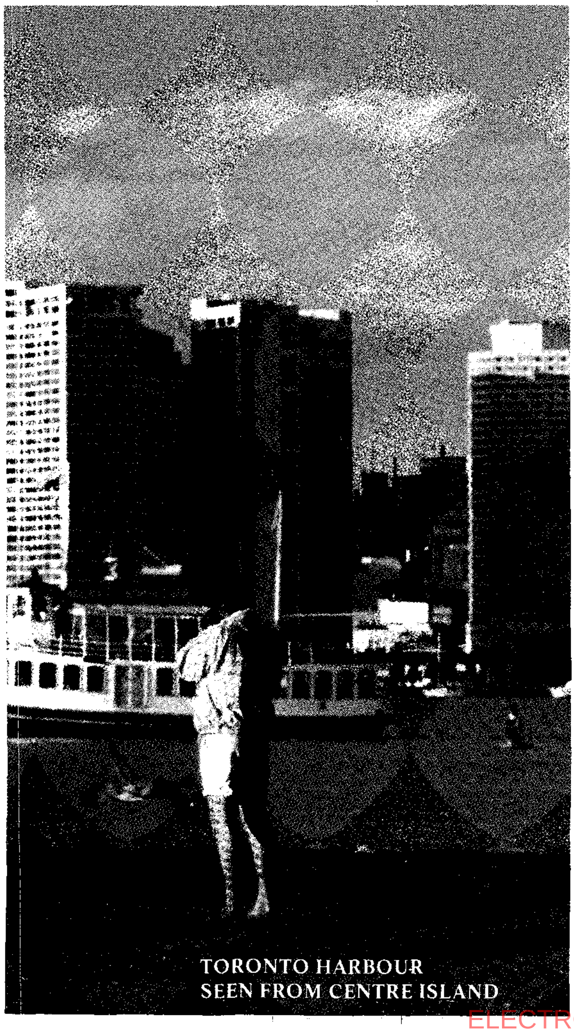
Marian after all these years, and there certainly was then, a kind of lovely innocence. It's a mixture of gentleness and personal dignity and savvy, and maybe even Southernness. She didn't fall prey to arrogance or smugness. She had good judgment, a sharp, active mind, and she knew how to stay connected to the ordinary people of the region, and these were qualities that could be picked up even by Southern sheriffs—some of whose judgments weren't always totally wrong."

Bob Moses, who saw a lot of Marian during this period, has another explanation for her coolness and courage. "Fear paralyzes you," Moses said. "Makes you feel helpless. That's where preparedness comes in—it helps you make the right response. Marian was prepared."

While she was getting black people and civil-rights activists out of jail, she was also becoming more and more interested in community organization as a way to change Mississippi. "I'm not a great advocate of the law as a means to rapid social change," she told an interviewer at the time. "I want to work through the law, but also to back it up with all kinds of other things—mainly community organization." In this respect, her thinking ran parallel to that of the people in Washington who were putting together President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. One of the most visible elements of the poverty program was Head Start. When the newly created Office of Economic Opportunity, in Washington, initiated the Head Start project, in 1965, as a means to provide educational, nutritional, and health services to preschool children of poor families, Marian and some others saw an opportunity and seized it.

THE State of Mississippi had declined to apply for federal Head Start funds. In April, 1965, therefore, a few public, private, and church organizations got together and formed the Child Development Group of Mississippi (C.D.G.M.), and, before the state really knew what was going on, C.D.G.M. had received a one-and-a-half-million-dollar Head Start grant. The Mississippi program created more than twenty-five hundred jobs in the state, and accommodated as many as twelve thousand children in its first year. "It was one of the most exciting educational programs for poor folk in the nation," according to Marian, who became one of its most influential board members. "It was a creative, awakening program. We took very seriously our mandate to provide public-health services and other kinds of support to parents." The program established centers in small communities throughout the state, where local poor people, most of them black but some whites as well, were encouraged to elect their own C.D.G.M. representatives, choose the teachers, and have a voice in everything that went on. More than any other Head Start project in the nation, C.D.G.M. changed the expectations of the poor people it served—helped them to feel like active participants in the social contract. In that way, it became a major and somewhat revolutionary agency for social change.

Mississippi's white leadership struck back that summer. Senator John Stennis complained vehemently to Sargent Shriver, the head of the Office of Economic Opportunity, that C.D.G.M.



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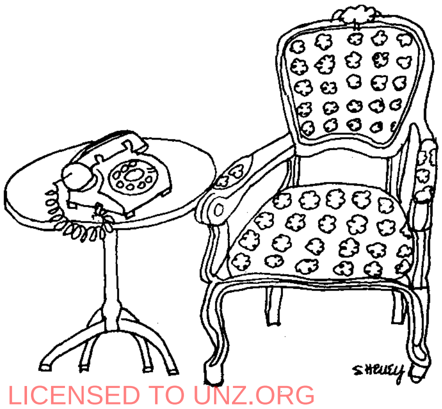
was using its main office, at Mount Beulah, an abandoned black college campus twenty-five miles from Jackson, as a center for racial agitation. Stennis, whose power stemmed from seniority and from his seat on the Senate Appropriations Committee, threatened to hold up the entire O.E.O. appropriation for the coming year unless C.D.G.M. and its Head Start program were defunded. The funding battle went on for months. The rather rudimentary recordkeeping in the Mount Beulah office gave fuel to Stennis and his allies, who claimed that C.D.G.M. had misused federal funds. C.D.G.M. had been operating largely on enthusiasm and imagination, so that when it ran out of federal funds in the fall of 1965 many of its top people simply stayed on as volunteers. But the charismatic New York psychoanalyst Tom Levin, the real catalyst behind C.D.G.M., was forced out as director, and his ouster precipitated a crisis at Mount Beulah. Some of the staff and several board members were not sure that they wanted government help at all anymore; if your primary goal was community development as a means of changing society, they maintained, then federal funds, and the restrictions that came with them, might just confuse the effort.

"Some people thought that it was a mistake to take federal money," Marian recalls. "They wanted us to rely on ourselves. It was a hard and valid point, and I understood it completely. On the other hand, I saw a lot of kids who were hungry. I thought our first obligation was to the children and to the poor. I loved what Tom Levin was doing. C.D.G.M. was the best black-leadership-development program I had ever seen, and it was the first time black people down there ever got financial independence from the white power structure. But our people were not getting paid. The program had to be protected. I realized you just have to cover those administrative bases if you're serious about serving the poor."

In the end, her arguments prevailed. John Mudd, a young Harvard graduate who had been recommended to the C.D.G.M. board by Marian Wright, replaced Levin as director. The accounts were put in order, the main office was moved to Jackson, and the program was refunded. A number of powerful national organizations had come out in support of C.D.G.M., including the National Council of Churches and the United Auto Workers. Marian's rationale for continuing to work through the system appeared to have been vindicated: although there were refunding battles every year for some time to come, Head Start continued to nourish and to teach enormous numbers of preschool children in Mississippi, and does so to this day.

The civil-rights legislation passed by Congress during Lyndon Johnson's first two years in office seemed to many movement veterans like a tremendous victory. In Mississippi, though, black people who had been enfranchised by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were literally dying of hunger. Mechanization in the cotton industry had thrown hundreds of thousands of poor blacks out of work. Many of them migrated to the ghettos of New York and other Northern cities; those who stayed faced starvation. Not many people outside the state knew how desperate things were until April, 1967, when the Senate's Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty held a public hearing in Jackson. Four senators were present: the Republicans Jacob Javits, of New York, and George Murphy, of California, and the Democrats Joseph Clark, of Pennsylvania (the subcommittee chairman), and Robert Kennedy, of New York. After listening to a lengthy denunciation of the entire poverty program by John Stennis, the subcommittee called on Marian Wright to testify. She was twenty-seven years old then, but she still looked like a young girl, trim and well dressed, with freckles under both eyes. In his 1969 book, "Let Them Eat Promises: The Politics of Hunger in America," the journalist Nick Kotz reproduced some of her testimony. "People are starving," she said. "They are starving and those that get the bus fare to go North are trying to go North. There is absolutely nothing for them to do here. There is nowhere to go, and somebody must begin to respond to them. I wish the senators would have a chance to go around and just look at the empty cupboards in the Delta and the number of people who are going around begging just to feed their children."



Peter Edelman, one of Robert Kennedy's legislative assistants, who covered all areas of domestic policy, had been advised to get in touch with Marian Wright before the subcommittee went to Mississippi. He talked with her briefly before the hearing, and asked her to have dinner with him that night. "I'm writing a brief, but I guess I've got to eat dinner," she replied. They talked until midnight. Three days later, Senators Kennedy and Clark did go on a tour of the Mississippi Delta country, with Marian Wright as their guide. She took them into shacks without water or light or heat, and introduced them to families whose children were obviously hungry and often sick. In one of those shacks, in a place called Cleveland, Robert Kennedy had a sort of epiphany. "There was a baby sitting on the mud floor," Marian recalls. "The baby was filthy, and it had a swollen, bloated belly, and Bobby sat there trying and trying to get that baby to respond, and he couldn't. It was one of the most moving things I've ever seen. You could see him get a sense of rage. He couldn't stand it."

When Kennedy and Clark got back to Washington the next day, they went immediately to see the Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman. They told him what they had seen in the Delta, and said that something had to be done at once to relieve hunger there. Peter Edelman, who was present, remembers that Freeman found it hard to understand why the people didn't have food stamps. Kennedy explained to him that they had no income —not even enough to buy food stamps. (It cost money then to buy food stamps.) Freeman was still incredulous. How could there be people in America with no income? "I've met them," Kennedy said. He urged Freeman to send some of his own people down to the state to see for themselves, and Freeman agreed to do so. Afterward, Kennedy told Edelman to go with them, to make sure they saw what he and Joe Clark had seen.

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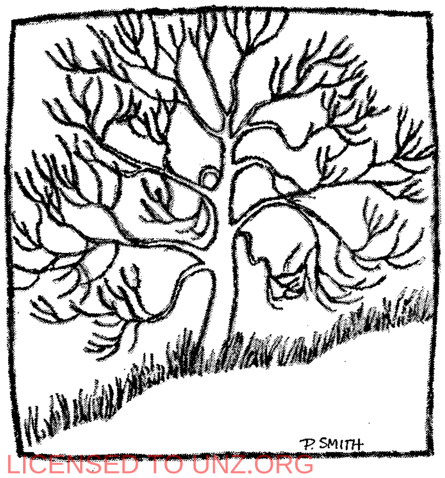
Minneapolis. The son of a prominent lawyer and New Deal Democrat, he had gone to Harvard, then to Harvard Law School, and then, in 1962, to Washington. There he clerked for Arthur Goldberg, the Supreme Court Justice, and subsequently worked as a lawyer in the Justice Department. Edelman accepted an offer from a Wall Street law firm in 1964, but he never showed up for the job. He joined the staff of Robert Kennedy's campaign for the Senate, and that had led to the job as Kennedy's legislative assistant. When he went back to Mississippi with a group from Orville Freeman's office, Edelman again looked up Marian Wright. "This time, it became clear that something was developing between us," he told me. Marian sometimes says that she and her future husband got together "over hungry children."

MARIAN WRIGHT was going through a period of transition herself at this time. "I'd realized that if you were going to change things in Mississippi you had somehow to affect federal policy," she said. "I'd been spending so much time going up to Washington to defend our Head Start program against Southern senators who wanted to put us out of business that it began to seem there was a need for a permanent office there. The poor had no one to answer back for them in Washington. Peter's being there became an added incentive. But there was something else, which was, How long could you live in a place like Mississippi, in that kind of life, without becoming a very different person? I kind of knew that either I was going to move away or I was going to be there for the rest of my life. Anyway, all these things converged. I got a grant from the Field Foundation to study how to make the laws work for the poor, and in March of 1968 I moved to Washington."

The Washington Research Project, as she called the new venture, quickly became involved in more than research activities. A month after she moved to Washington, the Poor People's Campaign came to town. Martin Luther King had been murdered in April; his grieving followers had decided to go ahead with the mass demonstration for economic justice which he had planned to bring to the capital, but it soon became apparent that King's successors in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference were unprepared for the complexities of the undertaking. "Ralph Abernathy and the others were in a state of shock," I was told by Roger Wilkins, who was then working as an Assistant Attorney General in the Justice Department. (His uncle Roy Wilkins was the executive director of the N.A.A.C.P.) "King had been fairly sophisticated about Washington," Wilkins said. "The only one of his lieutenants who was sophisticated in that way was Andrew Young, but Andy was still so shaken that he was walking around in circles. In view of that situation, a group of people inside and outside the government were asked to help. The group consisted of Carl Holman, who was then deputy staff director of the United States Commission on Civil Rights; Marian Wright; and me. We'd stay up half the night helping S.C.L.C. prepare its testimony before the various federal agencies and committees of Congress. Then we'd sleep for a couple of hours, go to the office, and help prepare the government's response. Marian coördinated all that."

A lot of bitterness had risen to the surface by this time, in Washington and around the country. Both King and Medgar Evers were dead, and in the increasingly militant civil-rights movement white people were no longer so welcome as allies. Many of the whites turned their idealism and their energy into protesting against the war in Vietnam. The pattern of steadily escalating violence on many fronts seemed tragically confirmed when Robert Kennedy was shot, in June, 1968. The movement that had drawn blacks and whites together in a kind of exaltation now seemed to be drowning in hatred. To many of the people who had participated in that movement from its beginnings, one of the most poignant events of the summer was Marian Wright's marriage to Peter Edelman, on July 14th, in the back yard of Adam Walinsky's house in Virginia. (Walinsky had been Kennedy's other main legislative assistant.) William Sloane Coffin, the Yale chaplain, in whose house Marian had lived for a year while she was a law student, performed the ceremony, and Arthur Goldberg made a moving speech. "I guess our wedding had symbolic overtones, after so much death, but we didn't realize we were being symbolic," Marian said recently. "We were just getting married."



After the wedding, they went off on an extended trip. Edelman and several other senior aides to Robert Kennedy had received Ford Foundation grants after his death, which were designed to help them make the transition to other careers; Marian and Peter used theirs to go around the world. "We sang for our supper, and Peter gave a lot of speeches," Marian told me. "But it was a terrific trip. We went to Africa—Kenya and Tanzania. Spent time in India and in Vietnam, where we actually rode in a helicopter with John Paul Vann. We got to Prague three days before the Russians invaded." They were away for five months. When they came back, Peter took a job as the associate director of the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial, and Marian resumed her direction of the Washington Research Project.

She and her small staff decided at that point to focus on education. "In 1965, Congress had passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which was a very important piece of legislation," she said. "It was called Title 1—later that got changed to Chapter 1. By 1969, it was clear that a whole lot of money was going to educational institutions throughout the country but that poor kids were not getting much of it, so we decided to do a report on that situation. We requested and got access to the audits in the files of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and we wrote a report asking whether Title 1 was reaching poor kids, and the answer then was no. This wonderful report of ours got the front page of the Washington *Post*, and that was tremendously exciting. And then nothing happened. Everybody went right back to doing business as usual. I still had the illusion then that if you tell people the truth they will do the right thing. But H.E.W. wouldn't do anything and Congress wouldn't do anything. That was my first big political lesson in Washington.

"After that came Head Start again. We'd been going through those C.D.G.M. refunding battles every year. They'd begun to get a little less vociferous, but then a new threat arose. With Head Start becoming more visible and getting a little more money, some of the conservatives on the House Education and Labor Committee decided that the program should be turned over to the states. Can you imagine what that would have done in Mississippi and other places where the state didn't even want the program? Anyway, I went to see John Brademas, who sat on the House Education and Labor Committee at that time, and told him he had to protect Head Start. And Brademas gave me my second big political lesson. He said, 'What are you for, and who are your troops?' He made it clear that you couldn't beat something with nothing. To make a very long story short, I began to think hard about who might have a self-interest in early-childhood development, and out of those questions came the child-development bill of 1971, which was a wonderful bill. I went back and asked Brademas a lot of questions, and then we got involved in a drafting process that included welfare-rights mothers, church groups, labor unions, feminists, the National Education Association, and many others. We put together a broad-based coalition to draft a child-care bill that would protect Head Start and extend its educational and health services to a whole lot more preschool kids. Brademas sponsored it in the House, and Walter Mondale sponsored it in the Senate, and we ended up getting very broad co-sponsorship on both sides of the aisle. And, to the amazement of a lot of people, the bill went through. It was an expensive bill, but it went through both houses just about as we had written it, virtually untouched. And then President Nixon vetoed it, with a stinging message that bowed to the right wing. He said that it had 'family-weakening implications.' A veto had just never occurred to me. I was absolutely shattered. We tried again the next year, but by then the right wing had discovered us, and the volume of hate mail scared a lot of people off. But that whole experience was very useful to me. I'd learned the importance of being highly specific in my goals, and I got the idea that children might be a very effective means of broadening the base for change. The country was tired of the concerns of the sixties. When you talked about poor people or black people, you faced a shrinking audience. That was really the beginning of looking at children and their unmet needs as a new way to build a coalition for social change."

"You don't deserve to have a nice car."

• •

The subtle racism of the Nixon Administration and the conservative redirection of the government on social issues were profoundly discouraging to anyone who had been involved with the civil-rights movement. Some people simply gave up the struggle and returned to private life, or left the country, as Bob Moses did; he went first to Canada and then to Tanzania, lived there for eight years, and then came back in 1976 to raise his family and to develop math curricula for public-school students in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He is now with the Efficacy Institute, in Arlington, Massachusetts, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the development of black children. In 1971, Marian and Peter Edelman, too, left Washington. They moved to Boston, where Peter became vice-president of the University of Massachusetts. Marian directed the Harvard University Center for Law and Education, and flew to Washington once a week to oversee the continuing activities of her Washington Research Project. They had two children by this time—Joshua and Jonah. Ezra was born in 1974.

THE Children's Defense Fund was started in 1973, when the Edelmans were still living in Boston. A lot of ideas that had been germinating in Marian's mind since the days of the Mississippi Head Start project came to fruition in this new undertaking, which was designed to cut through the barriers of race and class by focussing on the needs of children throughout the country, especially poor children. Her funding came from private foundations; C.D.F. has never sought

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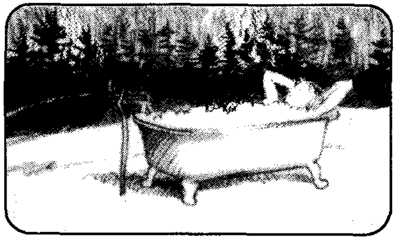

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or received government funds. With help from her extensive network of friends and admirers, both inside the government and in private life, she built a staff and began to publish impeccably documented reports on child health, nutrition, day care, and on other children's issues—reports that impressed more than one information-overloaded congressman as models of their kind.

Marian was spending more than a day a week in Washington by then. Paul Smith, C.D.F.'s chief statistician and data analyst, and one of the first people she hired, likes to describe Marian as the ultimate outsider, someone who firmly believes that you can influence the political system more effectively if you are not a part of it, but in another sense she has been a Washington insider from the time she started going up there from Mississippi to talk to legislators. There is an easy friendliness about her—a warmth and an effervescent humor that can disarm the most determined of her adversaries. She also has "an absolutely superb strategic and tactical sense, a real smell for how to get things done there," Peter Edelman says. "She understands how the system works. She's as tough and determined as anyone can be, but always within the rules of the system."

There have been times when she gave every appearance of relishing a good fight. It was Marian Edelman who was responsible for one of the key pieces of evidence against George Harrold Carswell, the Florida judge whom Nixon nominated to the Supreme Court in 1970. After the all-out battle that had ended with the Senate's refusal to confirm Judge Clement F. Haynsworth, Nixon's previous nominee, not many people thought that that body would have the stamina to oppose Carswell. "Everybody said you couldn't do anything about it, even though Carswell was much worse than Haynsworth, and that made me mad," Marian told me. "I just had a visceral reaction." She knew quite a lot about Carswell, having helped to circulate a memorandum on him the year before, when Nixon elevated him from the District Court to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. She knew that his rulings as a district judge had been repeatedly reversed and censured by the higher court for their blatant segregationist bias. This time, she sent one of her staff assistants down to Tallahassee to see what he could find out. The assistant came up with a copy of the legal papers changing a public golf course in Tallahassee into a private club—a transparent device to prevent blacks from playing there. The papers were signed by Carswell, as one of the incorporators. Marian and her associates produced a number of other damaging reports on Carswell's judicial record, and when Senate opposition to the nomination did get moving she played a highly active part in persuading certain influential senators to join it. Carswell's defeat came as a source of keen satisfaction to her in a very bad time.

The Nixon Administration was by no means deaf to the needs of poor people. A large increase in federal spending on food programs substantially alleviated hunger during the nineteen-seventies. Slow growth was registered in Head Start, for which the Children's Defense Fund lobbied hard in Congress each year. The conservative political climate of the Nixon years ruled out another attempt at a comprehensive child-care bill, however, and it soon became clear that the prospects for this sort of domestic legislation were not going to improve much under President Ford or President Carter. "Carter was very conservative fiscally, and it's hard to get a Democratic Congress to go against a Democratic President," Marian told me. "We tried a number of things during those years, but we had a very tough time of it. We decided to concentrate on trying to expand Head Start significantly. By that time, Head Start was being perceived in Congress as very successful, but it had never had any really big increases in funding. It was still at four hundred and twenty-five million a year when the Carter Administration came in. Over the next four years, we helped persuade Congress to move Head Start to nine hundred million. We also went after child welfare and child health improvement. We missed on child health, but Congress enacted a child-welfare bill in 1980, without a lot of help from the Administration. The Administration put its big effort into creating a separate Department of Education, and we had to spend a lot of our time fighting to keep Head Start out of it."

The Reagan revolution put an abrupt end to this period of small gains. The new Republican team made its position clear on domestic issues: twenty years of social legislation had created a welfare state, whose bureaucratic inertia had sapped the economy and increased the very problems it was meant to solve. "In the war on poverty, poverty won," the President quipped. Dismantling the welfare programs of four previous Administrations was high on the agenda of Reaganomics. Marian Edelman has described the process in a 1987 book, "Families in Peril" (Harvard), which was based on C.D.F. research:

> The biggest cuts came in 1981, thanks to President Reagan's budget requests. That year Congress enacted cuts in programs for low-income families and children that totaled $10 billion . . . for 1982 and a roughly equivalent amount for each subsequent year. Among the casualties were Medicaid, Maternal and Child Health programs, family-planning services, child immunizations, Aid to Families With Dependent Children, food stamps, school lunches and breakfasts, public housing for poor people, compensatory education to enable disadvantaged youngsters to keep up in school, and day-care services to enable poor and single and teen mothers to work.

The results were immediate and brutal. In 1980, 1981, and 1982, according to C.D.F., more than a million children a year were added to the poverty rolls in this country. By 1987, the total had reached twelve and a half million children—one in five. "Mr. Reagan came in and tried to repeal or weaken everything, every single federal children's program and every program protecting the poor," Marian said recently. "It was like being caught in an avalanche. We decided that our first priority was to keep those laws on the books. In some cases, it had taken decades to get them there. Let the money go for the time being, we figured, but preserve the laws. We began to lobby very hard on the Hill. We lost a lot of money in appropriations, but the laws are still basically in place. And then, in 1984, we began to turn the corner. Poverty was increasing in the country, and there was the new phenomenon of homelessness. Congress stopped cutting in 1984, and began to give some of the money back to the poor and to children." Intensive lobbying by the Children's Defense Fund in

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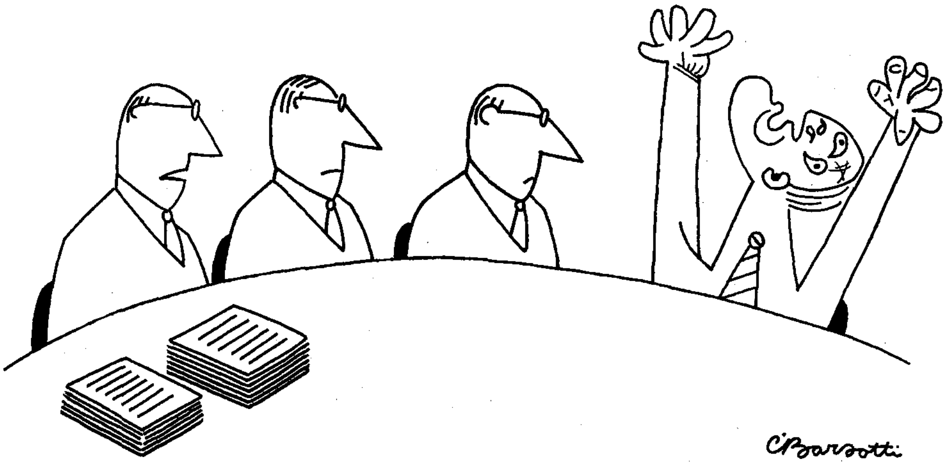


"Just a few more pages, Hansen, and we'll take a short break."

• •

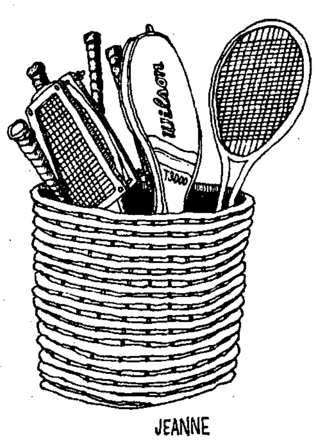
1984, 1986, and 1988 was a major factor in Congress's decision to expand Medicaid services to poor children. C.D.F. was able to show that increasing health services to children actually led to decreased government costs in doctor and hospital bills further down the line—an economic argument that has proved persuasive with Congress.

The Edelmans had moved back to Washington early in 1979. They bought the house in Cleveland Park, with a shady garden in back for Baptist Bar Mitzvahs and family get-togethers. Peter, who had spent the three previous years in Albany as the director of the New York State Division for Youth, was now teaching at the Georgetown University Law Center. Marian was speaking more and more widely on children's issues while continuing to direct the flow of C.D.F.'s research and advocacy. The Fund has attracted over the years a remarkably intelligent and highly motivated staff, which now numbers about ninety. While Marian is clearly the leader, the atmosphere there is collegial, informal, and very hardworking. "It's a place where self-starters do well," Sara Rosenbaum, a lawyer who is the director of programs and policy at C.D.F., says. "If people don't take hold on their own, Marian just loses confidence in them, and eventually they leave. She has no time for people who don't know what they're doing." C.D.F. has steadily widened the range of its concerns, going beyond the issues of health, family income, and early-childhood education to investigate homelessness, child abuse and child neglect (some two million two hundred thousand cases were reported in 1986), runaway youths (more than a million per year at last report), and the appalling epidemic of teen-age pregnancy. "We had always focussed more on young children," Marian told me. "But then, one day in 1983, we were putting together a book called 'Black and White Children in America,' and I saw from our own statistics that fifty-five and a half per cent of all black babies were born out of wedlock, a great many of them to teen-age girls. It just hit me over the head—that situation *insured* black child poverty for the next generation. I felt enormous guilt that I had missed seeing it until then."

Teen-age pregnancy became a high-priority issue at C.D.F. in 1983. Independent research had shown that half a million babies were born each year to teen-age girls in America, at a cost to the public (in welfare and medical payments) of a billion four hundred million dollars a year. The assumption that this was primarily a black problem turned out to be dead wrong. While the rate of teen-age pregnancy was higher among blacks than among whites, many more white than black babies were born to teen-agers each year, and the pregnancy rate for white teen-agers alone was shockingly high—more than twice the rate of pregnancy among both black and white teen-agers in Canada, France, or England. One of the two common denominators in all these cases, black and white, was poverty (the other was training in basic skills), and the all but inevitable result was a continuation of poverty. A pregnant teen-ager is more likely to drop out of school, to be unemployed, to go on welfare; less likely to get proper prenatal care (or any prenatal care at all), to provide adequately for the infant, or to function as a responsible parent. A teen-age parent earns approximately half the lifetime income of a woman who waits until the age of twenty to have her first child, according to C.D.F. In addition to calling attention to this problem in its reports and press releases, C.D.F. launched a sophisticated advertising campaign aimed at teen-agers, with posters, radio spots, and other media warnings about the long-term consequences of sex too early and sex without birth control. Its approach is pragmatic, not moralistic. The Moral Majority can put its faith in abstinence or "Christian marriage," but C.D.F. reflects Marian Edelman's belief that the world must be dealt with as it is.

About two years ago, Marian began to sense a change in the political climate. "Child care was becoming a middle-class white women's issue, for one thing," she said. "There had been this vast shift of women into the work force, and you heard more and more talk about child care. But it was not only that. In going around the country, as I do, I just found more receptivity to dealing with the truth than I'd found in all my twenty years in Washington. In spite of the illusions of many of our political leaders, the critical mass in this country seemed to me to realize that the future is really in danger, and that there are going to have to be some hard choices made. I found people listening and hearing in new ways. They actually seemed relieved to hear you say these things." It seemed to Marian that the time had come, after seventeen years, for another shot at a comprehensive child-care bill, and this became a primary C.D.F. legislative goal in 1988.

THE Act for Better Child Care was developed almost entirely in the C.D.F. offices, on C Street, not far from the Capitol. "There are lots of organizations that are involved with child care, but we view ourselves as the scut workers and technicians," Marian told me. "We have the staff to do the technical, detailed work. Our child-care staff, working with the legal staff, would go out to different groups and organizations around the country and see where they were on the issue, and then come back here to work on the development process." No major snags or disagreements were encountered in the drafting process, which took nearly a year and involved discussions with a hundred and seventy different organizations or individuals—a much broader coalition than the one put together for the 1971 bill. The result was a highly complex bill whose most prominent feature was a huge federal commitment—two and a half billion dollars the first year—to be allocated in two ways. Part of it would help low- and moderate-income families pay for child care, and the other part would go toward improving the quality of child care for all families. The provisions for establishing minimum standards of quality for all day-care programs receiving federal funds were the most difficult to write and, in Marian's view, they would be the most difficult for Congress to pass. The bill, which would be administered by states, would have allowed parents to choose among a wide range of child-care sources, but in order to receive federal funds each program, whether it was run by the school system, by the local community, by a church, or by a neighborhood woman in her own house, would have to meet the government's standards of health, safety, and quality.



Senator Christopher Dodd, a liberal Democrat from Connecticut, Senator John Chafee, a moderate Republican from Rhode Island, and Senator Alan Cranston, a liberal Democrat from California, introduced A.B.C. in the Senate on November 19, 1987. It was presented to the House on the same day by Representatives Dale Kildee, a Democrat from Michigan, and Olympia J. Snowe, a Republican from Maine. A lot of support for it had already been established in both chambers, thanks to energetic lobbying by the A.B.C. coalition. Forty-four senators supported it, and the bill had a hundred and seventy-two co-sponsors in the House. The main problem for this new bill, as for every other, was to get it on the calendar for consideration by the relevant congressional committees, and then to get it out of committee and onto the floor. "Conventional political wisdom says there's no chance of getting this to a vote in this session," Marian told me last May. "It's a major new piece of domestic legislation, it costs two and a half billion dollars, and we're in an election year—besides which, this is a short legislative session. On the other hand, conventional political wisdom has been wrong on just about everything this year. I'm starting to feel that the real danger, since day care has become such a hot political issue, is that we may get the wrong bill passed." She was referring to Orrin Hatch's child-care bill, which had been introduced two months before A.B.C.; this one would cost far less than A.B.C. (three hundred and seventy-five million dollars in the first year), and the money would go to the states to use in any way they saw fit, provided that it was for child care. "Hatch's is a politically cosmetic bill that talks about the private sector and has no minimum standards," Marian said.

George Bush announced his child-care plan on July 24th, shortly before the Democratic National Convention. He proposed what he called a "children's tax credit," which would give low-income parents a tax refund or credit of up to a thousand dollars a year for each child. The program, whose cost was set at two billion two hundred million dollars a year, would "put choice in the hands of parents, not in the hands of the all-powerful state," Bush said. His language was aimed at the right wing, but the proposal itself was aimed at women voters, who were showing a preference for Governor Dukakis in the polls. To Marian Edelman, it sounded like another significant acceptance of the government's role in making child care available to those who needed it. The money was clearly inadequate—proper child care costs at least three thousand dollars a year per child—and it would not touch the thousands of mothers on welfare who paid no taxes, but the proposal was

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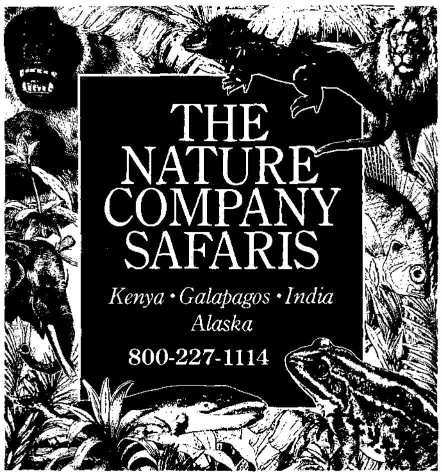
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a step in the right direction. Marian saw Bush's plan as a potential complement to A.B.C., not an alternative. A program that included tax credits among the range of options available to low-income parents, she felt, would provide an even stronger base for a truly comprehensive child-care system. President Reagan, who gave his blessing to Bush's tax-credit proposal, had indicated earlier that he would veto the A.B.C. bill if Congress passed it. "I'd love to give him that opportunity," Marian said when I questioned her about it. "If he wants to do that, in an election year . . . It's not impossible that we could override the veto, and what a terrific political issue that would be."

While A.B.C. was working its way through the committees—there were hearings on it in the House Education and Labor Committee in February and April, and in the Senate's Labor and Human Resources Committee in March and June—a major and completely unexpected problem arose. The National Education Association, which had been part of the A.B.C. coalition from the start, had managed to insert in the draft bill some very severe restrictions on the use of A.B.C. funds by church-based day-care centers, restrictions that went beyond any existing civil-rights law: there could be no religious symbols displayed in classrooms, and religious affiliation could play no part in the acceptance of children or the recruitment of staff members. Marian Edelman was not aware of these insertions at first. They had been put in after the drafting process was supposedly completed. "I learned about them when I got a call from the Catholics saying, 'What are you *doing*?' " she said. "The N.E.A.'s provisions would have basically excluded the Catholics and some other church groups from participating in child care—and churches are the largest single provider in the country. Altogether, they provide about a third of all child-care centers. We had simply stumbled into this terrible briar patch of church-state, and a lot of us had to spend the next two months trying to work out a compromise." The compromise was finally achieved, in meetings with the Senate and House committees, after lengthy consultations with members of the A.B.C. coalition. In the amended draft, church-based centers would be forbidden to engage in "any sectarian purpose or activity," but the N.E.A.'s provisions for banning religious symbols and against religious considerations in hiring staff were dropped.

Time now was running short. As a result of the two-month delay, A.B.C. was not reported out of committee to the full Senate until July 27th, and the House received it on August 10th. Congress was devoting most of its attention to the Conventions by then, and so was the Children's Defense Fund. Delegates to both Conventions were bombarded with C.D.F. literature, and children's issues figured prominently in the rhetoric and the platforms of both parties.

The 1988 Presidential campaign was as much of a disappointment to Marian Edelman as it was to the country at large. George Bush occasionally referred to child care and child health in his efforts to project his image of a "kinder, gentler America," but Michael Dukakis, who had given a lukewarm endorsement to A.B.C. "in concept," without saying he was for the bill itself, never really committed himself on the issue or contributed to the debate on it. Marian had hoped for more from the Democratic candidate. The most shameful moment in the whole election campaign, she said later, came when Dukakis appeared at the Neshoba County Fair, in Mississippi, on August 4th, twenty-four years after the bodies of Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Chaney were found, and failed to refer to the murders or to mention the victims' names.

At the end of September, the National Education Association announced that it could not accept the church-state compromise that had been worked out so laboriously, and was withdrawing its support from the bill. Several other groups within the original coalition also pulled out, among them the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the American Jewish Committee. These defections led to a flurry of political infighting on the Hill. After a certain point, Marian became convinced that the real issue for the National Education Association was not church-state at all. The

N.E.A., which represents nearly two million public-school teachers, is a very powerful interest group. C.D.F. had done battle with it a decade earlier, when the N.E.A. lobbied to have Head Start put under the newly created Department of Education. "The light bulb went on in my head that this was really about funding and about control," Marian told me. "The N.E.A. people sat through the drafting process on A.B.C. for a whole year and never raised the church-state issue as a major concern. But it's clear now that the growth sector is going to be in early-childhood care—it has to be. And so the real question is: Who's going to control the money? The N.E.A. feels that if there's going to be a two-and-a-half-billion-dollar investment in early-childhood care, then why shouldn't the schools control it? In my opinion, the church-state issue was nothing more than a Trojan horse."

Nevertheless, the A.B.C. coalition had started to come unstuck over an extremely touchy political issue, thus undercutting the bill's chances in an election-year Congress. Although there appeared to be more than enough votes in both houses to pass A.B.C. if it came to the floor, the Democratic leadership managed things so that it did not. Senator Robert C. Byrd, the Majority Leader, decided to attach A.B.C. to a legislative package that included two other bills, one providing for parental leaves of absence from work when the mother gave birth or a child was seriously ill, the other having to do with measures to forbid child pornography. This packaging greatly complicated matters and added new opposition forces. The Chamber of Commerce was against the parental-leave bill. Senator Robert Dole initiated a filibuster against the package. A motion of cloture was brought to cut off debate, and, to nearly everyone's surprise, a number of Republicans voted with the Democrats for cloture. ("They were very smart," Marian said afterward. "The Republicans didn't want to be blamed for killing A.B.C.") A second cloture vote, to cut off debate on amendments, narrowly failed, however, and at that point the leadership decided to pull the bill from the floor.

Marian took the setback philosophically. "It is still a good thing to have done," she told me. "It is now on the front burner with the new Admin-

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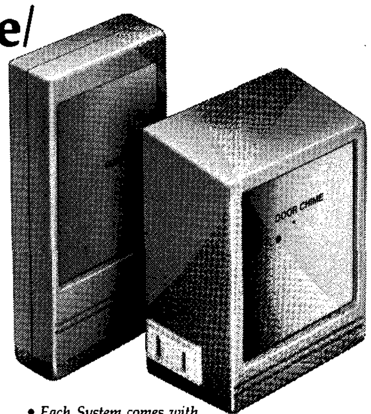

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istration, and a lot of things have already been settled. There were four main hurdles in getting any new child-care bill. The first was the federal role, and that is no longer an issue. The second was whether you could expect a significant investment, and once Mr. Bush had come in with his two-billion-two-hundred-million-dollar proposal we were over that one. The third issue was church-state, which was not anticipated, but now at least we know it's there. The last issue is whether or not there will be federal standards, which is a very big issue and one I feel very strongly about. But it's nice to have two hurdles instead of four." (Since she said that, the National Education Association and virtually all other parties to the A.B.C. coalition have agreed to new compromise provisions regarding church-state, and Senator Hatch, after intricate negotiations with Senator Dodd, has joined the team and become A.B.C.'s chief Republican co-sponsor. This greatly enhances the bill's prospects in the legislative battles that lie ahead.)

"One of the gaps in our approach was that we did not spend enough time with the business community, and now we're remedying that," Marian went on to say. "I'm hiring someone full time to work with the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, among other business groups. The business community is not our enemy on the bill—it's coming to understand that there is a bottom-line relationship between child care, on the one hand, and absenteeism and stress and worker productivity, on the other. American Express, for example, is now sponsoring a public-education campaign on child care. Campbell Soup and a lot of other companies have decided it's a business issue. The Committee for Economic Development recently issued a very important report: it recognized that children are a shrinking proportion of our population as it ages, and that unless preventive investment in early childhood is made a national policy our future work force will be disproportionately poor, unhealthy, untrained, and uneducated, and we will not be able to be competitive in the global arena. As the C.E.D. report pointed out, this country can't continue to compete when a fifth of our kids live in poverty and a third grow up in ignorance. Investing in them is not a national luxury or a national choice; it's a national necessity. If the foundation of your house is crumbling, you don't say you can't afford to fix it, while you're building astronomically expensive fences to protect it from outside enemies. The issue is not are we going to pay—it's are we going to pay now, up front, or are we going to pay a whole lot more later. Anyway, A.B.C. has been reintroduced in the new session. A lot of things are changing, a lot of new elements are appearing, and the new mishmash may very well lead to a broader, better bill than the one we had. We'll have a tax credit. We want Head Start to serve all of the eligible kids, instead of the eighteen per cent it serves now. We'll have a different set of compromises, and a lot of new pieces coming together."

The sense of urgency is never absent from her thinking. Children are dying of poverty every day in this country, she says. They die in accidents that occur when no adult is watching over them; they die at birth, because of insufficient or nonexistent prenatal health care; they die of malnutrition, or drugs, or preventable diseases—but the root cause is poverty. The latest National Center for Health Statistics report on teen-age pregnancy is very disturbing: it shows that the rate of births to young black women (under fifteen) has been going up since 1983. "This indicates a greater degree of hopelessness," Marian says. "What scares me is that today people don't have the sense that they can struggle and change things. There's more real despair now. In the sixties, in Mississippi, it just never occurred to us that we weren't going to win. We always had the feeling that there was something we could do, and that there was hope. We felt in control of our lives. My sixties were not the sixties some people remember, of violence and rude behavior. My sixties were disciplined about change, with old people and young people behaving in really responsible ways. It was a wonderful time to be alive. Martin King was an active, day-to-day presence in our lives. He's deified today, but what I remember is his talking to us about how scared he was, and telling us to keep moving. 'If you can't fly, run,' he said. 'If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl, but by all means keep moving.' "

—CALVIN TOMKINS

A REPORTER AT LARGE

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Nobody needs drug-store ice cream; pie is good enough for anybody.—*"Main Street," by Sinclair Lewis.*

EASY as pie. It's easy to make good, tasty, comforting, serviceable pie. Of course, excellent pie is harder to make, and harder to find, but excellence is always rare. The Shaker Lemon Pie served at Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, near Harrodsburg, Kentucky, is an excellent pie. The Shakers invented this pie back in the early eighteen-hundreds, when they began trading goods they grew or manufactured for the few necessities they couldn't produce. Lemons, which they considered an important item in a healthy diet, were one of the "world's goods" they needed. Their lemons came all the way from New Orleans and were so dear that the Shakers believed it a sin to waste any part of them, so they devised a recipe that would use the whole lemon.

Pie from that recipe is served in the public dining room of the Trustees' House at Shaker Village. The pie has a beautifully browned crust—surprisingly thick, but so light and flaky that it shatters under a fork. Inside is a generous lemon custard, with bits of lemon pulp and rind throughout. The sourness of the lemon plays off the sweetness of the custard in an altogether delicious way. It is a pretty pie, too. Here is the way to make both the crust and the filling. The recipes are from "We Make You Kindly Welcome," a cookbook available at the restaurant.

Crust for a 9-Inch Pie

2 C. flour
1 tsp. salt
⅔ C. plus 4 tbsp. shortening
4 tbsp. cold water

Mix flour and salt. Cut shortening into flour until it forms very small balls. Sprinkle in water, a tbsp. at a time, while mixing lightly with a fork until the flour is moistened. Mix it into a ball that cleans the bowl. Do not overwork the dough. Roll out on floured board.

(The less you handle dough, the better; handling toughens it. A good crust must be crisp, even at the risk of being a bit crumbly.)

Shaker Lemon Pie

2 large lemons with very thin rinds
4 eggs, well beaten
2 C. sugar
Crust for pie

Slice lemons as thin as paper, rind and all. Combine with sugar; mix well. Let stand 2 hours, or preferably overnight, blending occasionally. Add beaten eggs to lemon mixture; mix well. Turn into 9-inch pie shell, arranging lemon slices evenly. Cover with top crust. Cut several slits near center. Bake at 450° for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 375° and bake for about 20 minutes or until silver knife inserted near edge of pie comes out clean. Cool before serving.

Pleasant Hill is on U.S. 68, the Harrodsburg Road, which winds past prosperous-looking horse farms, curving through stratified rock as it dips down to cross the Kentucky River. There have been no Shakers at Shaker Village since 1923, but it has been restored to its bucolic picturesqueness. After eating the excellent lemon pie, I went back to my car and let my dog, Tazzie, out for a run. We found a sheepy hillside and sprawled out on it, soaking up the early-spring sunshine. Tazzie, who is mostly German shepherd but with soft edges, gazed decorously at the sheep, sniffed the air, and rolled over on her back in the short grass, kicking her feet lazily in the air. I lay on my back, too, staring at fluffy clouds and listening to meadowlarks.

My family has always been a pie family. When my son, Brian, was in high school, he spent more time hitchhiking around the country with friends than I or those in loco parentis at his boarding school ever knew. He and his friends seldom had much money, but they always had enough in their jeans to buy pie and coffee. Fifteen years and more later, he is still an expert on pie in astonishing places. A few years ago, I was driving across the country with him and his wife, Liddy, when, in a small town in Kentucky, an abstracted look came across his face. He said to Liddy, who was driving, "If you'll turn left at the stop sign and then go two blocks, there's a place that has really good pecan pie." We did, and there was. We sat there eating pie and drinking coffee, and, caffeine coursing

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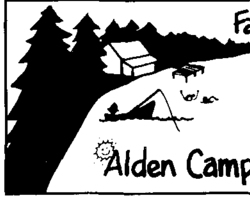

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through our veins, we spun a plan. Someday we would drive around the country on back roads and eat pie. It would be the Great American Pie Expedition. Their lives, alas, are now regulated by jobs, but mine grows freer and more unruly with each passing year, so Tazzie and I had undertaken the pie expedition. We were on its final leg; during the previous summer and autumn, we had been eating pie—some good, some bad, some indifferent—through Pennsylvania, southern New England, and on into Maine, where the blueberry and raspberry pies are glorious. Now we were heading west, through the cream-pie belt.

BEFORE setting out on the initial trip that summer, I had wanted to establish some sort of standard for the expedition—a federal benchmark. I was in Washington, D.C., where I live for part of the year, so my husband and I went to lunch at the United States Senate Family Dining Room, which prides itself on its pie—particularly its pecan pie—nearly as much as it does on its bean soup. It seemed our patriotic duty to order, in addition to the pecan, the Senate Apple Pie, and only fair to add the special of the day, Senate Chocolate Mousse Pie. The last-named turned out to be a triumph of the imitation-food industry, and the apple pie was more government issue than federal benchmark. Both it and the pecan had been warmed up, though not, thank heaven, in a microwave oven. The microwave oven is one of the worst enemies that pie has in restaurant kitchens these days. I remember especially a piece of raspberry pie in Maine that had been microwaved to death. The hot raspberries, all integrity gone, oozed sadly out of the crust, and the pie had a faintly bitter aftertaste. Freshly made, warm pie is one of life's better things, but after it cools it should be allowed to grow old gently rather than brought back to an unnatural warmth. Our government-issue apple pie was no worse than many apple pies I was to sample on the road, but certainly no better. It contained too much cornstarch filling and too few apples, and those present were flaccid and tasteless. The pecan was a marginal improvement, but so cloying that it would have benefitted from the quarter cup of brandy a friend of mine always adds to pecan-pie filling to cut its sweetness.

A few days later, Tazzie and I headed west and north in search of better pie. In western Maryland, on U.S. 40 at Sideling Hill, we drove through a magnificent roadcut, which is sometimes shown in geology textbooks; it is a place where a great part of the earth's history is laid out. There are signs along the roadside: "No Parking. No Climbing." No gawking, no looking, don't be interested in what there is to see. When I had driven through there with Brian and Liddy on our trip a few years back, the State of Maryland wasn't so prohibitive, and we had parked, climbed, gawked.

Tazzie and I followed U.S. 40 north into Pennsylvania, stopping by the bank of a stream for Tazzie to run and for me to have a cup of coffee from the thermos. It was June, and the cow parsnip would soon be in bloom; daisies and buttercups already were. Wild geranium was everywhere. A blackbird, pert and sweet-voiced, was singing. "There's a cabbage white," I told Tazzie, "and there's a tiger swallowtail." I was trying to interest her in butterflies, but she paid them no attention whatever.

I sat sipping my coffee and thinking about pie. Meat pies, according to the Columbia Encyclopædia, have been around since the days of the Romans, but *no one* mentions fruit pies—or any dessert pies—until the fifteenth century. Even after that, no one ate very much pie until the New World was settled. Americans were the first to understand what pie could be. For instance, the English had been making what they called pompion by cutting a hole in the side of a pumpkin, extracting the seeds and the filaments, stuffing the cavity with apples, and baking the whole. New Englanders improved on this, combining the apples and pumpkin and putting them in a proper pastry. Then they eliminated the apples and added milk, eggs, spices, and molasses to the mashed, stewed pumpkin. Molasses, the colonists' substitute for sugar, was so important for pies that on several occasions a New England town put off its celebration of Thanksgiving for a week or more in anticipation of a shipment of molasses from the West Indies.

Americans discovered that other tasty pies could be made from materials at hand. A mock-cherry pie could be made with Cape Cod cranberries

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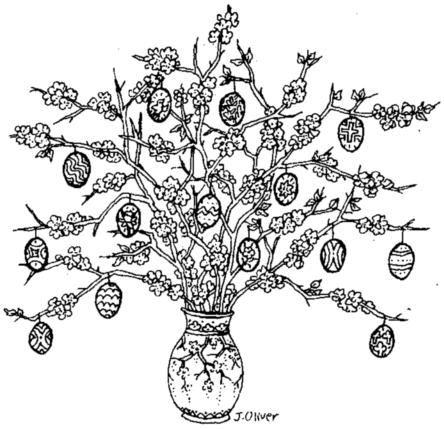
(spiced with raisins from Spain). Vermont pie was made with apples—a fruit successfully transplanted from England—and syrup cooked down from the sap of maple trees. Pie has never been more loved than in nineteenth-century America, where it was not simply dessert but also a normal part of breakfast. The food writer Evan Jones quotes a contemporary observer as noting that in northern New England "all the hill and country towns were full of women who would be mortified if visitors caught them without pie in the house," and that the absence of pie at breakfast "was more noticeable than the scarcity of the Bible." I knew a farmer in Iowa who died at the age of ninety-three a contented man, for he had eaten pie at breakfast every day of his life.

Herrings Family Restaurant is on U.S. 40—on the eastern outskirts of Uniontown, Pennsylvania. It is called a family restaurant not because it is O.K. to wear bluejeans there or because the food is moderately priced (although both these things are true) but because the Herring family runs it. I sat in a rosy-orange plastic booth and had a home-style platter of beef stew, and after eating it I hoped that the pies would be as good. There was a choice: banana, coconut, peanut-butter, lemon, cherry-cream, blackberry, apple, cherry, raisin, and peach. A friend had recommended the banana pie, so I ordered that, but I couldn't resist ordering blackberry, too. The waitress looked amused. "I never had anyone order two pieces of pie before," she said. The crust on both pies was superb. The banana was still a little warm, and the filling spilled onto the plate. The bananas had been mashed before cooking, so there was pulp throughout instead of discrete slices. It was a good pie, but the blackberry was even better—tart and beautifully seedy. It was dense with fruit and had just as much filler as was needed, no more. The maker of the pies was pointed out to me—a slim, bespectacled young man. He blushed when I congratulated him on his pie-baking abilities, and told me that he sometimes made the pies but his relatives also made them. "The whole family works at the business," he said. "Grandpap started it. We all work in it." He pointed to the waitress. "She's my cousin."

"We make pies every day," his cousin said as I paid my check. "Doughnuts, too. And bread. And we eat all of them, but we stay skinny."

In the days that followed, I remembered fondly the pie at Herrings, for I had pies so middling as to be not worth reporting and one that was bad enough to be notable. I would not have been cross about this particular peach pie if pie had not been so boasted of on the restaurant's menu, and if it had not been peach season. I had asked for the apricot pie, which I'd heard good things about, but apricot was not available the day I was there, and since it was the height of the peach harvest I didn't think I could go wrong ordering peach pie. The crust was tasteless and thick and rested heavily in the stomach. The cook had been stingy with the peaches, which were suspended in a gluelike filling. I've had bad peach pie *out* of season—I remember especially one canned-peach pie in El Reno, Oklahoma—but during peach season it is hard not to make a good peach pie. Fresh peaches should be sliced and sweetened with enough white or brown sugar to make them pleasant to the taste. Egg yolk mixed with flour is a good thickener for peach pie, and after the thickener, sugar, and peaches have been lightly combined they should be heaped up roundly in an unbaked shell, topped with more crust, and baked. Toward the end of the baking, the pie should be removed briefly from the oven and the top crust brushed with a bit of egg white and sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon; the pie is then returned to the oven to brown prettily. That's all there is to it.

Of course, the underpinning of that pie—the crust—should be adequate. A New York man I know who thinks about pie a great deal says that pie judgments are sexually dimorphic. He believes that women judge a pie by its crust, men by its filling. That's so, says my friend Abby, because women know that the crust is the hardest part to make. That's *not* so, says my friend Linda, who loves both parts too much but eats only the filling, in the vain hope that most of the calories have settled in the crust. The truth is that a good pie can be ruined by a bad crust but a good crust cannot save a bad pie. A crust can be only so good, anyway. It should show off the pie and not call a lot of attention to itself. On my pie expedition I often found that restaurant cooks used frozen pie shells rather than making crusts themselves. In many cases, that was probably a mercy, because if left to their own devices they would make worse. Once, after I had eaten a memorably bad piece of cherry pie in a café in West Virginia the cook and the waitress sat down in my booth to talk. I asked the cook how she made the crust, which was thick and soggy. She told me that it was made of Crisco, flour, and milk. I've had a few bad milk crusts, and I don't use milk myself. Seldom has there been a week in my adult life when I haven't made a pie, and the following is the crust I use more often than any other. It is easy to make, crisp in a way that flakier crusts can't be, and shows off many pie fillings to advantage.

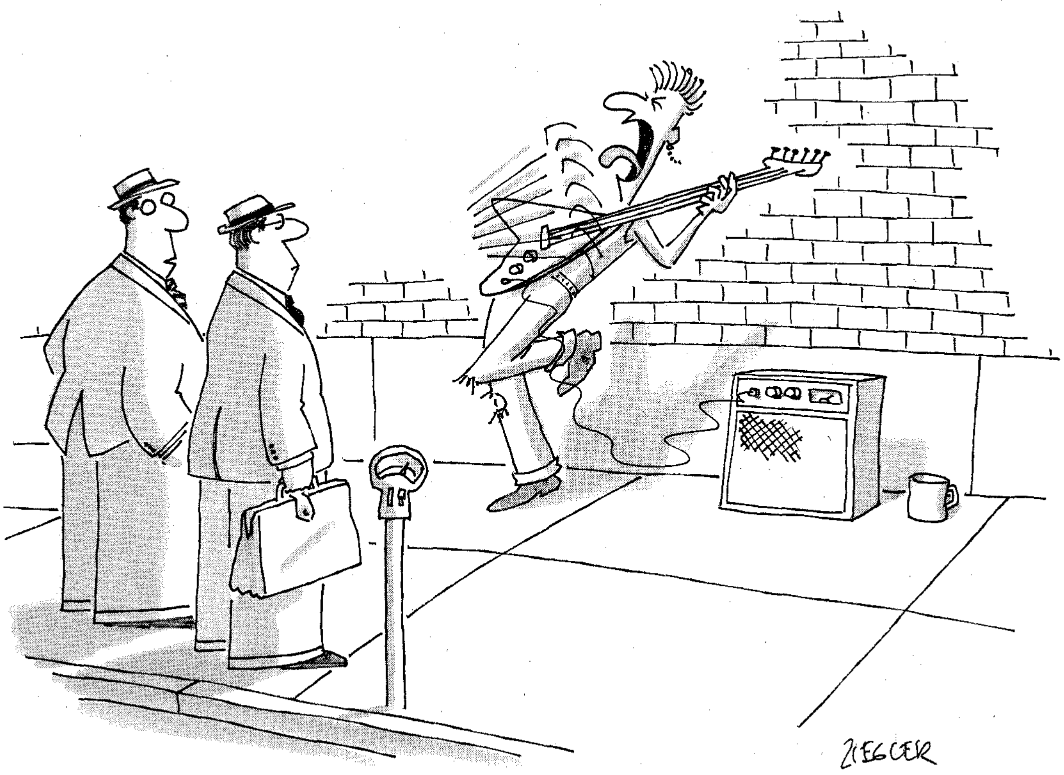


DOUGH FOR A TWO-CRUST PIE

2 C. flour
1 tsp. salt
½ C. cooking oil
¼ C. water

Mix flour and salt in a bowl and make a hollow in center of the mixture. Quickly blend water and oil together in a cup and pour into hollow in flour-salt mixture. Combine ingredients quickly and lightly with a few strokes of a spoon. Pinch dough in half and roll out each half between two sheets of waxed paper. Peel off top layer of paper. Invert dough into piepan and remove second layer of waxed paper.

On several occasions in the course of my expedition I stopped at the Mount Nittany Inn, which is just north of Tusseyville on Pennsylvania Route 144, hoping to have its special peanut-butter pie. A man whose pie sense I trust had urged me to try it. "Just don't think about it too much," he said. "Once you get over the idea of it, it's really terrific." But each time I went there the peanut-butter pie was not available, for one reason or another. The inn's proprietor agreed that it was a wonderful pie; his wife made it, he told me, but he didn't know how. "She makes the peanut butter all creamy, and then she freezes it," he



"I prefer the Perry Como version."

• •

said. "But I don't know what all she puts into it. A lot of stuff. Cheese, maybe?" I do hope not. In an effort not to think about *that*, I finally ordered, on my third stop, the inn's walnut pie, which was very good indeed. The crust was perfect, and the filling was similar to that of a good pecan pie, with black walnuts substituted for the pecans. The whole was topped with cream, whipped gently. It was satisfying, but not satisfying enough to drive the peanut-butter pie from my mind. I wish I could stop thinking about it.

I also failed to have the famous sour-cream raisin pie at the Potato City Motor Inn, in Potter County, Pennsylvania. That harsh, empty country, on the northern edge of the state, comes into its own in winter, during hunting and snow seasons. In daisy time, the Potato City Motor Inn is a quiet, unvisited place and serves up no sour-cream raisin pie. I asked the waitress which of the three pies available that day I should order. "None of 'em," she said. The Potato City Motor Inn was originally built as a place for potato growers to meet. Dr. E. L. Nixon, uncle to Himself, was involved in the beginnings of Potato City, where he crossbred potatoes and developed new strains. The cavernous dining rooms of the inn were empty when I was there. I would have liked at least to see the nearby ice mine, "a deep mountainside shaft" that "for no apparent reason forms heavy ice beginning in the spring," according to my Pennsylvania road map, which adds, "In winter the ice disappears." But it was closed. Potter County was in commercial diapause, so we drove on.

I stopped to feed Tazzie in a spruce woods, where bracken grew among the trees. While she ate, I watched clouds of blue butterflies—spring azures—squeezing into nearly opened blackberry blossoms to lay their eggs. We drove east on U.S. 6, a gentle road that wound through small towns filled with well-kept late-nineteenth-century houses surrounded by poppies. In between towns, wild blue phlox and buttercups were in bloom. I heard an Eastern wood pewee calling *pee-a-weeee, peee-a-wee*. But the pie was indifferent until the X-Trail Restaurant, in Mansfield, at the intersection of U.S. 6 and Business Route U.S. 15. The X-Trail is a cheerful, unpretentious restaurant, painted blue, with crisp blue-and-white curtains at mullioned windows. It serves good pie baked in deep-dish piepans, which is just the way pies should be baked. (These pans are hard to find—something I discovered while shopping for one as a birthday present for Michael, my stepson, who has become interested in piemaking. But a few stores still stock them, and any serious piemaker should have one.) The X-Trail's coconut-cream pie was cool enough to cut, so I ordered some. It was a delicate pie, a handsome pie—monochrome, with white meringue floating on a cream-white filling whose very pallor guaranteed that no packaged mix had been used. The crust was crisp, clean, distinct. The waitress told me that it was the restaurant's most favored pie—even more popular than the black-raspberry pie, which I also sampled, and which was stuffed with juicy berries.

I asked at each of my stops which pie was the most popular, and usually it was the coconut-cream. Coconut-cream is a good year-round pie. My friend Charlie, a Republican, is a pie conservative, and he doesn't believe in cream pies. The only real pies, he says, are of berries or other fruit, but he thinks that no one makes even fruit pies very well anymore. "You're not going to find good apple pie anywhere," he told me. I hoped he was wrong, but as the summer progressed it seemed possible that he might not be. When in doubt, I always ordered apple pie, and it was almost always as bad as the government-issue pie I'd had back in Washington—or worse. With such a standard, small wonder that gardeners with a lot of green tomatoes on their hands at the end of the season and with frost imminent tell us that green-tomato pie is just as good as apple any day.

Charlie wouldn't have approved of the chocolate-meringue pie I had at the Hotel Wyalusing, in Wyalusing, Pennsylvania, just off U.S. 6, by the Susquehanna River. I did. It was made of bittersweet chocolate so rich that the memory of Droste chocolate apples came to me. The meringue was as brown as a toasted marshmallow and so flat and neat that it must have been spread with a knife. I would have

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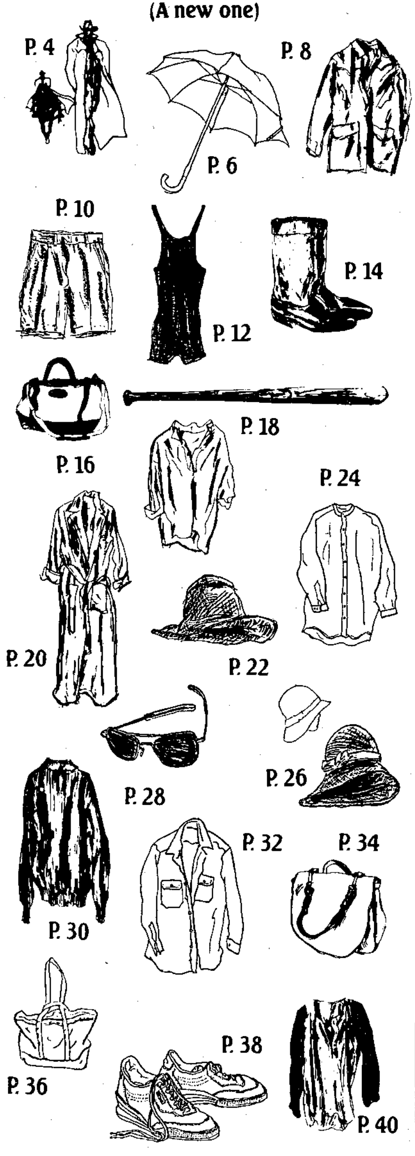

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enjoyed staying at the Hotel Wyalusing. It was a pleasant place—a former stagecoach stop lovingly restored, its brick front cleaned and its gingerbread woodwork, balconies, and dormers painted pale olive and buff yellow—but I wanted to eat pie at a New Jersey diner, and I wanted to get on to New York City to pick up a sweet-potato pie from Hugh Nelms, the president and corn-breadist of Hoecake International, so I drove on.

I discovered on my pie expedition that making a schedule was often a mistake. Certainly it was this time, because twenty-five miles west of New York City a tractor-trailer rig had tumbled over, and as a result all of northern New Jersey was in gridlock. I coasted, usually in neutral, across the state, reading the *Times* from page 1 through the classifieds, seldom passing the one-mile-per-hour mark. Pie at a diner was the first part of the plan to be abandoned, but I did want that sweet-potato pie. Abby had been telling me about it for years. She said that Nelms sells his pie every Sunday in fine weather at the open-air market at Seventy-seventh Street and Columbus Avenue. It is, she told me, a beautiful pie to look at, and a pie so tasty that she can't resist buying it in the six-inch-wide, hand-held version and eating it on the spot.

I tried to break away to the north, thinking I might come into the city from a different direction, but there had been a two-car collision somewhere in Connecticut, and that made the northern roads sluggish, too. Pie thoughts faded, and all I could think of was escape. I fled to the wilds of western Massachusetts and took stock. Sweet-potato pie would have to be added to my list of pies not sampled: Nittany peanut-butter, sour-cream raisin, apricot, sweet-potato. I don't like shoofly pie—a pie that has always reminded me of sweetened library paste—and wasn't even going to try eating that. I do like Key-lime, but Florida was not on my route. Nor was Colorado, though a friend had recommended the black-bottom pie in Denver. Nor Wisconsin, where there was said to be a strawberry pie so good that it was impossible to eat only one piece.

The next day was better. It was a golden, sunny morning, and beside the Connecticut River at Turners Falls, Massachusetts, I stopped in a park filled with bluebells to give Tazzie short run. A friendly woman was walking her dog, who was part hound, part black Lab, and Tazzie fell in love with him. While our dogs played, the woman and I talked, and she told me about the Shady Glen, a restaurant on the main street of Turners Falls, where a friend of hers went once a day to eat chocolate-cream pie. The Shady Glen is a wide, squat, hospitable café. Inside are cheerful yellow booths and a wide selection of pies. I ordered the squash pie. It was my first of the season, nicely spiced with nutmeg and set off by a firm, crisp crust.

Diner chic is spreading, but it has not yet come to the Miss Florence Diner, on State Route 9, in Florence, Massachusetts, a vestigial outcropping of the more uptown-looking Alexander's Taproom. Miss Florence appears to have been there a long time and looks as though it would outlast Alexander's. It serves a thick, sincere apple pie—not an exceptional pie but a good pie. The apple pie at Allen Brothers Farm Market, on U.S. 5, in Westminster, Vermont, *is* exceptional. The indoor farm stand smelled of good things from the bakery the day I was there, but the fragrance of fresh apple pies dominated all. ("Thy breath is like the steame of apple-pyes," Robert Greene wrote in 1589.) I bought a whole one and a slab of Vermont Cheddar to go with it, and then I drove down to Boston, where I was going to meet my husband and stay with Brian and Liddy, who live there.

It was an apple pie almost beyond praise. "This pie is good enough for breakfast," Liddy said reverently. The crust set it off well, and the apples—Lodis, in this case—were superb. Some of their skins had escaped the peeler and were in the pie, an addition that the four of us liked, but when I talked later to Alice Porter, the Allens' baker, she was a bit embarrassed about them. Tim Allen, a second-generation apple grower, says Northern Spies make the best apple pie, and that's the variety Mrs. Porter uses when they're in season. When they're not, she uses Lodis or Cortlands.

ALLENS' PIECRUST

2 C. flour
¾ C. shortening
1½ tsp. sugar
1 tsp. salt
1 egg
1 tbsp. vinegar
¼ C. water

Mix dry ingredients in a bowl and cut in shortening with a pastry blender. In a separate bowl beat together egg, vinegar, and water. Mix with dry ingredients and refrigerate dough for at least two hours before rolling out. Makes a 9-inch two-crust pie.

ALLENS' APPLE-PIE FILLING

4 C. sliced apples
½ to ¾ C. sugar, depending upon tartness of apples
½ tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. nutmeg
2 tbsp. flour

Mix flour, sugar, and spices. Add to apples and mix lightly. Pour into unbaked pie shell. Dot with butter. Cover with top crust. Brush top with whole egg beaten with a little milk. Bake at 325° for 35 to 40 minutes or until browned.

Charlie, there's your pie.

IN Maine, I settled into a routine of raspberry and blueberry pie, and each one was better than the one before it, which makes them very difficult to write about. The raspberry I remember with the greatest fondness is one I bought at the Village One Stop, in Lovell, in the western part of the state. One stop indeed: liquor, worms, gas, grain, groceries, lunch counter. A sign over the lunch counter, hand-lettered, said "PLEASE EAT OR WE'LL BOTH STARVE." I asked the young woman behind the counter about pie. She pointed to a man in a plaid flannel shirt sitting on a stool at the far end. "Talk to him—he just finished baking them."

"You have pie?" I asked him.

"Yep."

"What kind?"

"Pineapple. Blackberry. Raspberry."

"Raspberry sounds good."

Silence.

"May I have some?"

"Well . . . They're awful warm to cut. You want a whole pie?"

"Please."

The whole pie was five dollars and eighty-five cents. I bought it and a copy of the Boston *Globe*. The man smiled, faintly, and said, "Have a nice one. I mean a day, I guess. Have a nice day."

The warm pie filled the car with its fragrance. Tazzie and I drove north on State Route 5. The bracken at the roadside had the hint of bronze that says fall is on its way. The air and the sunlight agreed. We threaded in and out among logging trucks and finally pulled in at a rest stop, beside a lake where a loon was calling. A hand-carved sign on a post said that the spot was not maintained by any government agency and asked me to take away my trash. A reasonable request. The entreaty was signed by E. Littlefield—presumably the person who had mowed the grass so neatly and painted the blue picnic table, which was sheltered by a maple tree. Tazzie checked out the lakeshore, and I joined her, balancing on the rocks there. The late-morning sun made the wavelets glisten, their shimmer set off by the dark greens of spruce, fir, and pine that ringed the lake. I spread my *Globe* out on the picnic table, poured coffee from my thermos, and took out the pie. It was nicely browned and had little slash marks in the crust to let the steam escape. The edges were lovingly crimped, and the crust broke apart under my fork in delicious shattery flakes. The filling was no sweeter than it needed to be. It tasted of fresh raspberries and summer sunshine. I read my *Globe* and listened to the loon and ate pie. Thank you, E. Littlefield.

We resumed our drive north, but the blue sky and the sunshine prompted us to stop beside the Sunday River. Tazzie made friends with a man in sweatshirt and jeans who was peering at trees in a puzzled way. He asked if I had a field guide to trees with me. I did. We talked trees, and he told me that he had just begun learning to identify trees and birds and was driving around the country trying to learn the names of all he saw. Splendid man. I asked him if he'd like five-sixths of a really good raspberry pie. He said yes, and I gave it to him.

One afternoon, we stopped beside the Kennebec River, below the town of Skowhegan and its falls. Tazzie pounced on crickets, catching none. I watched damselflies. Clouds thickened and turned gray as they floated up from the southwest. Goldenrod and aster, the yellow and purple of summer's end, bloomed around us. I could hear a chain saw somewhere. All along the roads I'd been driving, I'd seen serious, multicord woodpiles. Winter is never far from the thoughts of people who live in north country.

Tazzie, who takes more interest in rocks than most dogs do, and certainly more than is good for her teeth, fetched numbers of them out of the Kennebec and laid them neatly on the bank, sometimes sticking her entire head underwater in a most undoglike fashion. We drove on through towns whose front lawns were bright with mountain ash, through Passadumkeag, through Mattawamkeag—which is to say that we were on our way to Aroostook, or

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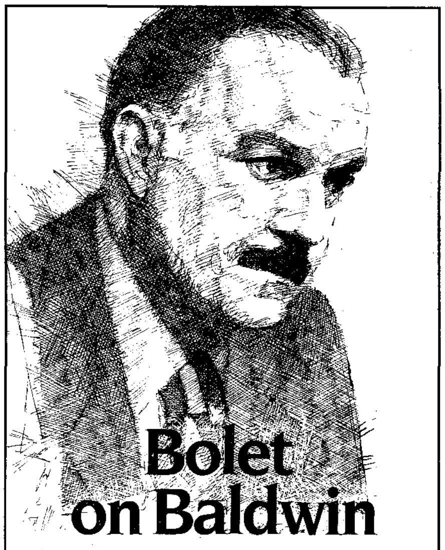

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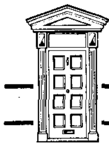

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The County, as Down Easters call it. And there, in Houlton, I found the Elm Tree Diner, on the southwestern edge of town, on U.S. Alternate 2. It specialized in homemade pies, and it was a busy place, with table-filled additions that were signs of its commercial success. The blueberry pie had a thick but light crust. The berries were sparingly sweetened and little cooked; they maintained their integrity and berryish freshness so well that they brought back the memory of a sunny day when Brian, then twelve, and his father and I walked up Cadillac Mountain and stuffed ourselves with blueberries that we picked as we climbed.

I would have liked to buy pie in Wytopitlock, but there was none to be had, so I stopped in front of a boarded-up general store ("For Sale"), amid an unkempt patch of orange hawkweed, red clover, and pesky ripe burdock waiting for a chance to entangle itself in Tazzie's fur. There I ate a piece of French apple pie that I'd had the foresight to buy at the Elm Tree Diner. It is the same pie that in Pennsylvania is called Dutch apple pie—a single-crust apple pie topped with a crumbly mixture of brown sugar, flour, and butter (the "dowdy" of apple pandowdy). This French apple, however, was much better than any of its Pennsylvania Dutch relatives that I had sampled. It was generously filled with apples, and was pleasantly tart. It is always a mistake to sweeten these pies much, because the crumbly dowdy is sweet enough, and needs the sharp fruit contrast to be at its best.

Never play cards with a man named Doc, never eat at a place called Mom's, and never go to bed with anyone who has more troubles than you do, Nelson Algren advised. I discovered an exception in the case of a place called Mom's on U.S. 1, in Harrington, where I met Liddy and Brian for a travelling pie party. We ordered strawberry-rhubarb, apple, and blueberry pies and shared them. The strawberry-rhubarb was out of season but good nevertheless, and the apple was good, too, with a lovely ooze-browned back to its crust. The blueberry was the best I'd had so far. The crust was good—thick but not heavy—and the fresh blueberries that filled it were wild ones, sparkling and tangy. And then there was the blueberry pie we had at Duffy's, in East Orland, which was the last one I ate and the best one of all. The legend on the cover of Duffy's menu sounds a bit truculent:

> Welcome to Duffy's
> We Here at Duffy's Are a
> Native Orientated Restaurant
> We Aren't Fussy
> And We're Certainly Not Fancy.
> If You Are,
> Ellsworth Is 12 Miles East
> And
> Bucksport Is 7 Miles West.
> Yours Truly,
> Duffy

Even so, Duffy's is a welcoming sort of place, with geranium-filled window boxes. We ordered graham-cracker pie first. "You know what banana-cream pie is?" the waitress asked. "Well, it's like that, without the bananas." That's not quite accurate. It was more like a custard pie on a graham-cracker crust, topped with whipped cream and sprinkled with graham-cracker crumbs. Quite good, and much better than most custard pies, which are at best sweet, modest little things. But the three of us gave the blueberry pie gold stars all around. The crust had been pinched up into extreme points, and was delicious. The local blueberries were delicious, too, and their flavor was enhanced by the generous addition of cinnamon.

In season, though, all blueberry pies are good. A few years ago, I was visiting a non-baking friend, who asked me to make one. The oven wasn't working, but we thought we might be able to bake it on the covered outdoor grill, over a wood fire. There was no piepan, but perhaps I could make do with an aluminum cake pan. There was no rolling pin or waxed paper, so I used a water glass to roll out the pie dough between two pieces of brown paper cut from a grocery bag. There were, however, plenty of fresh wild blueberries, and there was sugar and cinnamon and a lemon, which I cut up and added to the filling. The pie that came off the grill had rather too thick a crust, and it had cooked unevenly, and it tasted of wood smoke, but it wasn't a *bad* pie; the blueberries were too good for that.

I had two other pies of note in Maine. The Farmington Diner, under the sign of fork and spoon transverse, was on State Route 4, on the south side of Farmington; it laid out logger-sized meals and good pie. The lunch special the day I was there was two thick pork chops cut from a very large pig, a platter of carrots, a platter of mashed potatoes and gravy, and a soup bowl full of applesauce. I made tiny inroads on the food, and realizing that I'd badly neglected lemon-meringue pie I ordered a wedge of it. It came accompanied by coffee in a sturdy mug that fitted amiably into my hand. My eyes told me that the pie filling was too yellow to be anything but a mix, but my taste buds said they didn't care: it was a good, classic diner pie—lots of loft to the meringue, and the crust a bit relaxed. Real lemon-meringue pie is too delicate and too ephemeral to be served in a diner, and too fussy to make for a diner cook to be happy with it.

The Milbridge House, in Milbridge, near the intersection of U.S. 1 and U.S. Alternate 1, serves a tasty and unusual pie. It is called Nantucket Cranberry Pie, and the recipe was brought up to Maine by Greg Charczuk, who owns the restaurant, when he moved from New Jersey. I copied it from the stained scrap of paper that his wife, Helen, uses when she makes it.

NANTUCKET CRANBERRY PIE

3 C. fresh cranberries
Sugar to coat berries
½ C. chopped walnuts
1 C. flour
1¼ tsp. baking powder
⅛ tsp. salt
¼ C. shortening
1 C. sugar
1 egg
⅓ C. milk
½ tsp. vanilla
⅛ tsp. almond extract

Rinse cranberries, and dredge with sugar. Pour into greased 10-inch piepan, leaving excess sugar in bowl. Add chopped walnuts to cranberries. Cream shortening with 1 C. sugar. Add dry ingredients alternately with mixture of egg, milk, vanilla, and almond. Spoon and spread over cranberries and walnuts. Bake at 350° for 25 to 30 minutes.

This is a fine pie, but, because the crust is cakelike and all on top, there will be pie conservatives who won't accept it. I will. If a creative and artful cook invents something and calls it pie, I'll call it pie. Let the crabbed formalists make their categories; I wouldn't like to miss something as lovely as this cranberry-walnut pie—an echo of the colonists' mock-cherry—or the banana-puddin' pie, which will make its appearance later.

MY autumn was a busy one, and then the snows came, so it wasn't until the highways cleared in early springtime that Tazzie and I headed south from Washington on the pie roads.

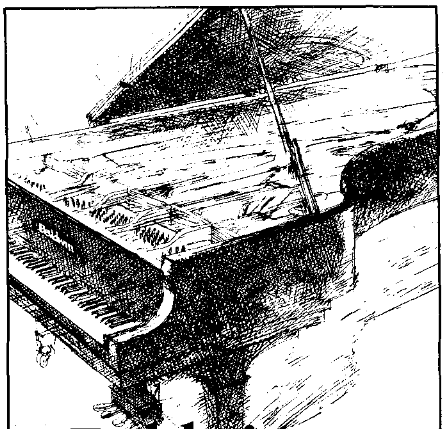
Just south of Buffalo Gap, Virginia, on State Route 42, I came upon Our Place. It was part house, part restaurant, and was presided over by Betty Wade, a blond, comfortable woman with an easy smile. She showed me the back living room, where her daughters used to play until they were old enough to help out in the restaurant. Thirteen years ago, she told me, she and her husband bought the restaurant, and she started cooking there using "The Better Homes and Gardens Cook Book," just as she did at home. "I wasn't sure folks would like my cooking," she said. "But they did. I didn't have to change anything." It seemed like the right kind of place to order butterscotch pie. I did, and watched the waitress slip quarters into the Wurlitzer.

> Shoe string, you ain't got no
> money.
> Shoe string, you cain't hang
> around here.
> Shoe string, you got your hat on
> back'ards.

My pie arrived. It was a trim, neat, light-brown wedge on a crisp crust, topped with daintily browned meringue. Home cooking: I am back in the nineteen-forties, hungry as only an eight-year-old can be with supper still half an hour away. I am standing in front of the open door of a refrigerator—a big one, with gently sloping shoulders. Inside, on the shelf next to the ice-cube-tray compartment, is a row of tall stemmed dessert glasses, each one filled with its own golden dollop of butterscotch pudding. I count. There are five, and five of us will sit down to supper. There is no way I can winkle one out of the refrigerator without drawing down maternal wrath. I can't remember what happened after that. I can't even remember eating the butterscotch pudding after finishing my nice vegetables. All I can remember is the yearning. I'm glad to be an adult. As I leave, George Jones is wailing from the Wurlitzer:

> The last thing I gave her was
> the bird,
> And she returned the favor with
> a few selected words.

We drove on. State Route 42 is my kind of road, playing tag with a little river that glistened in the sunlight. Well-tended farms are tucked in among the hills. We stopped at a wayside, superior in every respect to interstate rest stops, and Tazzie ran about, sampling the river, snuffling expec-



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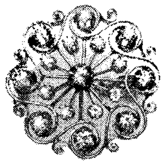

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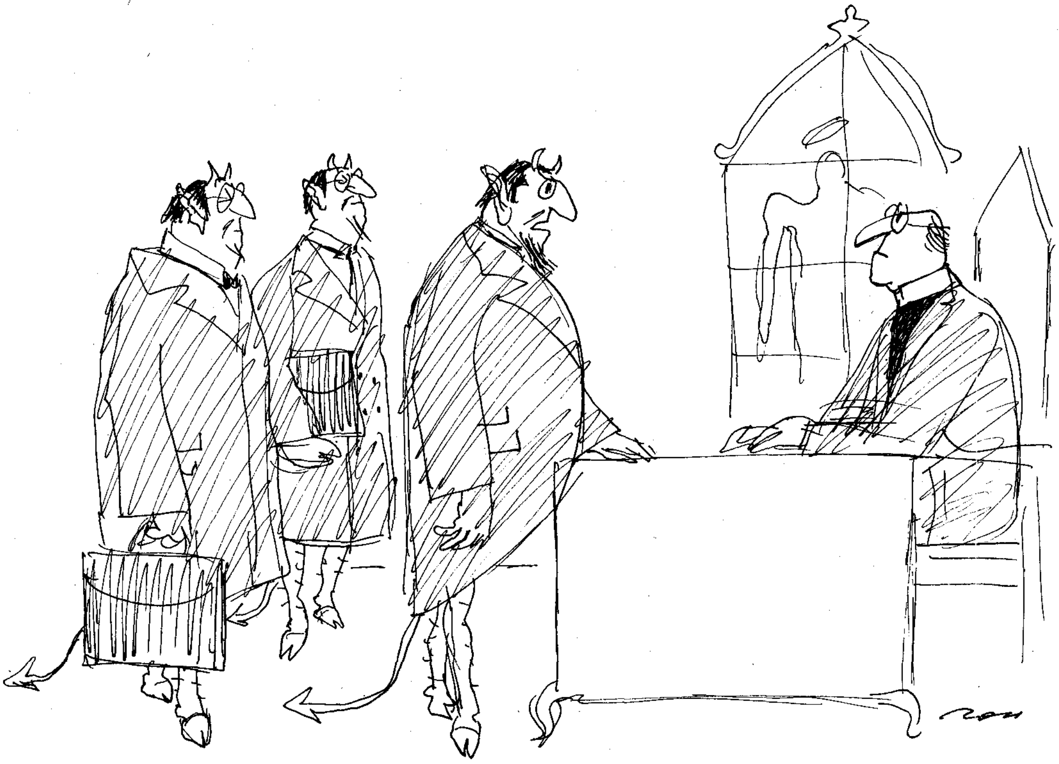

"Confrontation isn't getting us anywhere. We have to talk."

tantly at the newly softened ground. A nuthatch in a sycamore at the river edge called *whoink . . . whoink* as he surveyed the bark for edibles. I leaned against the same tree and soaked up the wan sunshine, glad to be on the road, glad to be driving south to meet the springtime.

Pie called, and we got back in the car and went west on U.S. 60, a more peaceable road than the distant but parallel interstate. In Grayson, Kentucky, on Main Street, I stopped at the City Café, in accordance with pie rules I have formulated over the years for the Middle West. Rule 1: Pie is good in eighty-five per cent of the eating establishments that are between two other buildings. Rule 2: Good pie may often be had near places where meadowlarks sing. If you follow these two rules in the Middle West you will find yourself at the City Café or its like. A restaurant like this makes it unnecessary for a town to have anything but a bland local newspaper. Nearly all the citizens gather there early in the morning for breakfast or coffee and the exchange of news and gossip. By 8:30 A.M., whatever has happened during the past twenty-four hours has been talked over. These cafés have a pressed-metal ceiling, sometimes covered with insulating panels, and dark imitation-wood panelling on the walls. Oil paintings by local artists are often displayed there for sale. The doors open early—by five or five-thirty. Fresh-baked pie is ready by nine-thirty or ten. The coffee drinkers are replaced by the dinner crowd not long after (away from cities, dinner is the noontime meal), and by two the pie is gone and the restaurant is closed for the day.

There was a Mountain Dew sign in front of the City Café. A poster in the window promoted a local wrestling match. Inside were an imitation-brick carpet and imitation-woodgrain tables. Everything was imitation except the food. I ordered pecan pie. It was exceptional—solid, with good texture. The filling was rich and eggy tasting but not overpoweringly sweet. The pecans on top were chopped, glazed, brown. Wilma Berry, a big woman with a pleasant face and a curly hairdo, was the waitress and owner of the café. She was happy to share her recipe, adapted from "What's Cooking in Kentucky":

Palestene Layne's Pecan Pie

1 tsp. vanilla
3 eggs, slightly beaten
1 C. corn syrup, light or dark
½ tsp. salt
½ C. white sugar
½ C. brown sugar
2 C. coarsely chopped pecans
1 unbaked 9-inch, deep-dish pie shell

Blend well, but do not overbeat, vanilla, eggs, corn syrup, salt, sugar. Stir in pecans. Pour into pie shell. Bake approximately 50 minutes in preheated 350° oven, or until knife comes out clean.

• •

The Beaver Dam Café was on the main street of Beaver Dam, Kentucky, just off U.S. 231, and was nestled between the Style Shop and Catalyst Management, Ltd. The sign outside said "Home of Good Food." Inside, imitation-needlepoint placemats said:

Cherish Yesterday
Dream of Tomorrow
Live Today

Nice, I thought; the Beaver Dam Café would have good pie. The possibilities, according to the menu, were interesting: cherry, pinto-bean, pecan, banana-pudding, and (Sundays only) buttermilk. It wasn't Sunday, nor was the pinto-bean ready, so I asked the waitress what I should order. "We sure do brag on our banana-puddin' pie," she said. I ordered banana-puddin' pie. It was fresh from the kitchen, chock-full of bananas, and so warm and relaxed that it had to be served in a bowl. The manager—a birdlike, wary little woman—said she'd be happy to give me the recipe but not her name. "What if someone tried to make it and didn't like it?" she asked. I am able to reassure her. Over the past months, my stepson has been committing pie courtship. He and his friend Barbara have been having pie dates, making pies from the recipes I brought back from my expedition. They tell me that the pecan and apple pies were the best all around and Shaker lemon the prettiest and most flavorful, but that the banana-puddin' pie was the most fun.

Beaver Dam Café Banana-Puddin' Pie

4 eggs, separated
3½ C. milk
¼ C. flour
¼ tsp. salt
1¾ C. sugar
4 tbsp. butter or margarine
2½ tsp. vanilla
Vanilla wafers
Bananas

Beat egg yolks with milk and add to mixture of flour, salt, and 1½ C. sugar. Cook

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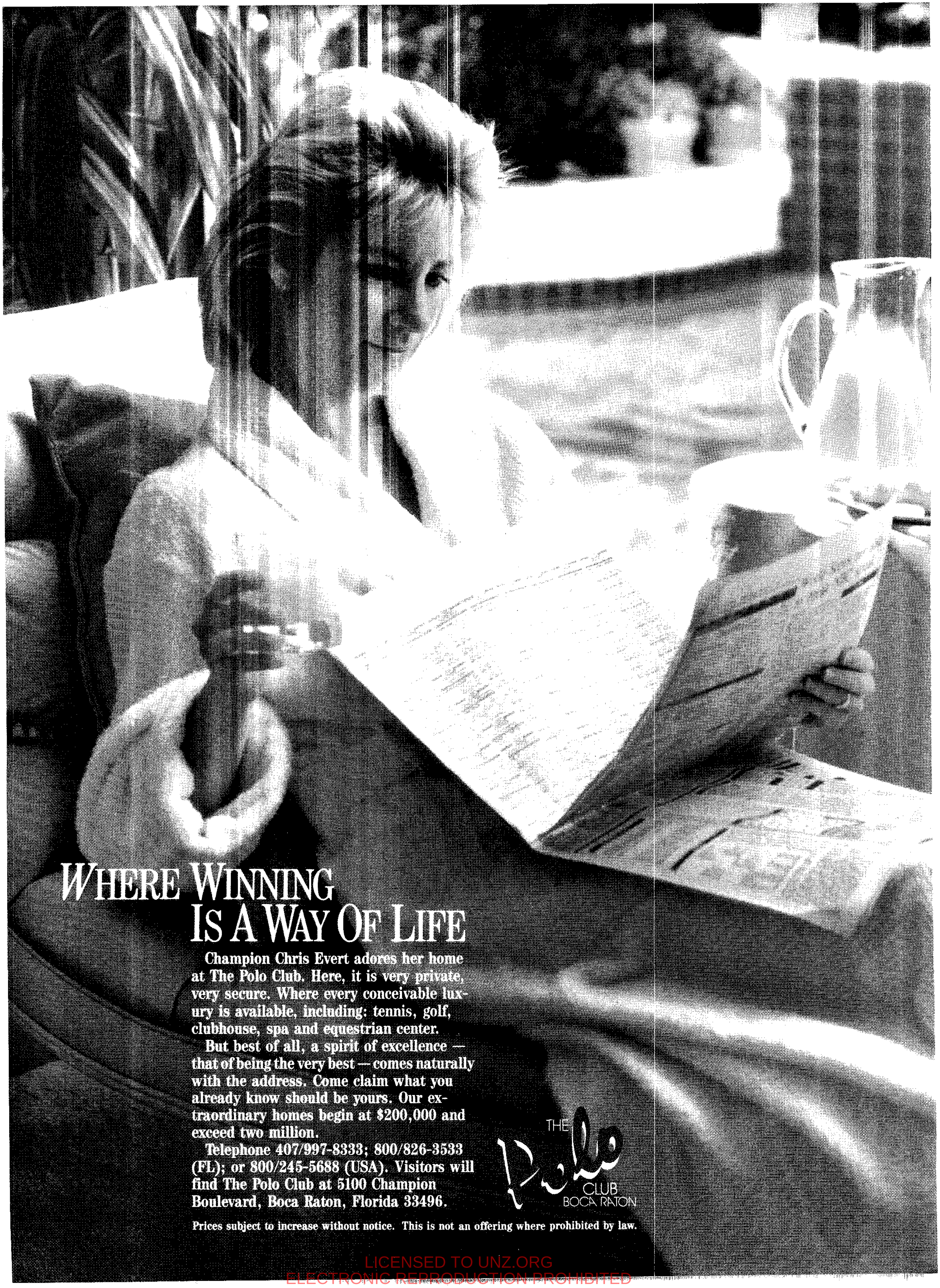
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in a double boiler over medium heat until thickened. Remove from heat and stir in butter and vanilla. In the bottom of a loaf pan put a layer of vanilla wafers and then a layer of sliced bananas. Pour one half of the custard over them. Repeat. Whip egg whites until stiff, adding ¼ C. sugar near the end. Spoon meringue on top of pie and bake in 425° oven until meringue is slightly browned.

A generation ago in the Ozarks, where I farm, pies also served romance—and an unlikely adjunct, school finance—in what were known as pie suppers. Back in those days of one-room schools in rural areas with a poor tax base, pie suppers were an annual autumn event. Young women would bake the best, the prettiest, the fanciest pies they could and take them to the school in the evening for young men to bid on. The top bidder would earn not only the pie but the right to eat it with its baker. The money from the auction funded the school. The young women would try to mark their pies in such a way that certain young men would recognize them, and Ozark folklore is full of stories about men who created emotional havoc by bidding—perhaps mistakenly, perhaps not—on the "wrong" pie.

In addition to Pie Rules 1 and 2, there is another, which applies to the entire country. Rule 3: Never eat pie within one mile of an interstate highway. This rule eliminates pie in most fast-food restaurants and in most truck stops, which are usually also franchises these days. I once violated Rule 3 and had a disappointing piece of gooseberry pie at a much recommended truck stop just off Interstate 70, between Kansas City and St. Louis. But now I thought I had better check out the small, independent truck stops, so I visited the Wyatt Junction Truck Stop, just west of the Mississippi River, on U.S. 60. A sign on the wall said:

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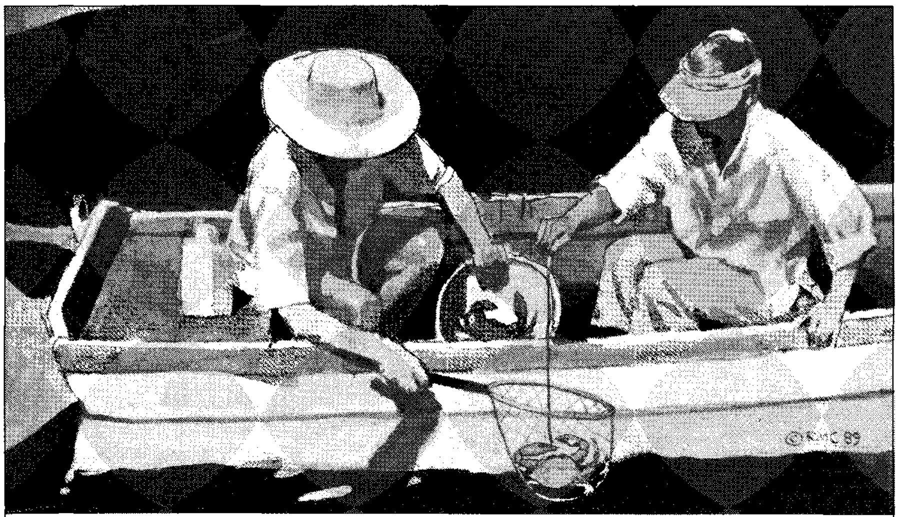
THANK YOU FOR COMING
HAVE
A
NICE
DAY

I ordered the dinner special: chicken-fried steak, fried bread, deep-fried okra, French-fried potatoes, and a tossed salad made almost entirely of fried bacon. A trucker in a black leather jacket came in looking enor-

HOMES & ESTATES



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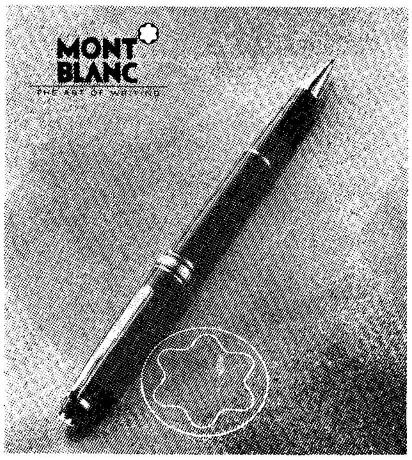

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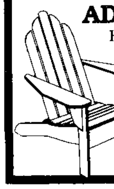

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mously pleased and announced to no one in particular that he'd passed his sweetie about two hundred miles back and left her behind. He hoped she wasn't frosted. He put a quarter in the jukebox:

> The last thing I gave her was
> the bird,
> And she returned the favor with
> a few selected words. . . .
> Then left two streaks of Firestone
> smokin' on the street.

Sweetie pulled up and climbed out of her own eighteen-wheeler. She sauntered in. She had a fluffy shock of black hair and was wearing tight jeans, high-heeled red shoes, and a black leather jacket to match his. She glared at him and ordered Royal Crown Cola and apple pie. If she could, I could. I told the waitress to hold the R.C. but lemme have some pie. It was very like that served in the United States Senate Family Dining Room.

I WAS just a bit bilious by the time that I got to my farm, in southern Missouri, so I spent a couple of days there sucking on soda crackers and letting Tazzie visit her favorite places down by the river. I had heard about Opal Wheeler's Pie Factory, on U.S. 63, south of West Plains, but I'd never been there, and I enlisted the help of my friend Nancy for a pie foray. Nancy is a little bitty skinny woman who runs a health-food store and talks a lot about bean sprouts. She is always ready to try something new, however, and is a woman of considerable enthusiasm. We drove down U.S. 63 and found the Pie Factory, a cheery, small ten-sided building with white walls and red-trimmed windows. It would have been easy to miss, because it sits back from the road and has only a small, hand-painted sign to call attention to itself. Opal Wheeler is a grandmotherly-looking woman with a warm smile. She had been in the restaurant business for years before she and her sister drove by the newly constructed building in 1985. Her sister, who understood Opal's love of baking, pointed to it and said, "Opal, wouldn't that make a cute little pie factory?" Opal agreed, rented the place, put up the sign, and set to work. She starts rolling out pie dough on the counter in the center of the building each morning at about five-thirty. She is usually done baking by eleven, and the rest of the day she sells pies—sometimes whole, sometimes by the slice with coffee.

The day Nancy and I were there she had apple, apple-raisin, raisin, pecan, cherry, apricot, blueberry, pineapple-cream, peach-cream, cherry-cream, icebox mixed-fruit, strawberry-rhubarb, gooseberry, lemon-meringue, chocolate, coconut, banana, chocolate-delight (chocolate, pecans, cream cheese, single crust, whipped topping), lemon-delight, pecan-delight, and strawberry. I ordered a cup of coffee and told Nancy she could order whatever she wanted if she would talk to me about it. She began with a wedge each of apricot, apple-raisin, cherry, icebox mixed-fruit, and strawberry. And a cup of tea. "Oh, look," she said. "The crusts are sprinkled with sugar and browned. Pretty. . . . This apricot is too mooshy. . . . The apple-raisin is superior, though. I think it's the best one. . . . No, the cherry is the best—tart, lots of cherries, not much gooey filling. . . . No, maybe the mixed-fruit is my favorite. It's got a single crust, then a layer of cream cheese, then cherries with fresh pineapple. And this whipped topping! Wow! Can this lady make pies!"

"Anything else appeal to you?" I asked.

"Well, maybe I'll try a piece of lemon-meringue."

I watched in admiration as she ate that, too. Opal Wheeler freshened my coffee. I asked Nancy again which pie was best.

"How can I choose?" she asked. "Each one is a jewel."

"Nancy," I said, "you run a health-food store."

"Yeah, isn't it wonderful? She can make good pies out of stuff like this. I mean, white flour, white sugar, solid shortening? Maybe she could make the crusts out of whole-wheat flour. Oh, well, it just shows you what a talented cook can do."

Nancy left with an entire chocolate-delight pie in a box. She was happy, in perfect health, looking not one ounce fatter. And I was happy. I had always hoped that pies were good for us—a hope that had been encouraged by an article in the *Weekly World News* of October 27, 1987. I've long thought that there is a supermarket-tabloid headline designed to sucker every man, woman, or child at least once. Mine was "SNICKERS AND TWINKIES MAKE YOU HEALTHY, SAYS FOOD EXPERT," touting an article declaring that there was "more nutrition in a Snickers bar or a Twinkie than in an apple." Might I not therefore assume, after watching Nancy tuck into her pies, that apple pie was the healthiest way to eat an apple?

In western Missouri, the good pie places thin out. The town cafés have become Daylight Donut outlets, to the detriment of both pies and doughnuts, but just at the border of Oklahoma I had an unexpectedly dainty and tasty chocolate pie at the Corners Minimart Motel & Café, on U.S. 60. The chocolate filling rested on a flavorful crust and was topped with a perfect, delicate meringue. Outside, prickly pear grew on the sunny, south side of the restaurant, where there was a big white box with a sign on it that said:

CAUTION
BABY RATTLERS

Hints of the West.

Once I had crossed the Oklahoma line, I began seeing red-tailed hawks hunting high in the air above the road. It had been a long time since I'd heard a meadowlark sing. In one small town after another, waitresses in the cafés shook their heads when I asked for pie, and offered cobbler instead. "And mighty good cobbler it is, too," a customer informed me in the Hot Biscuit Café, in Vinita. But I drove on. There were sandburs at the rest stops, and Tazzie whimpered when she got them in her feet. The sun was warm. Spring had been in Oklahoma for some time. The sky opened up. I could see forever. The road threaded between hills covered with prairie grass, and someplace between Bartlesville and Ponca City I realized that I was in the West. I rolled down all the windows. *Ky-y-y-yr* screamed a red-tail overhead. I leaned out the window and the wind blew and tugged at my hair. "*Ky-y-yr*," I screamed back. Fun. Can't do that on the interstate. The road was empty, and I was in love with driving. Out of nowhere, an Oklahoma trooper came up behind me and pulled me over. He reminded me that the speed limit was still fifty-five off the interstate, and gave me a "courtesy" ticket. Nice young man. Troopers know pie, so I asked him where he went to get it. He blushed a little, took off his hat, scratched his head, and thought awhile. Then, by way of explanation, he said, in his slow drawl, "Sorry, Ma'am, but you're in cobbler country now."

—SUE HUBBELL

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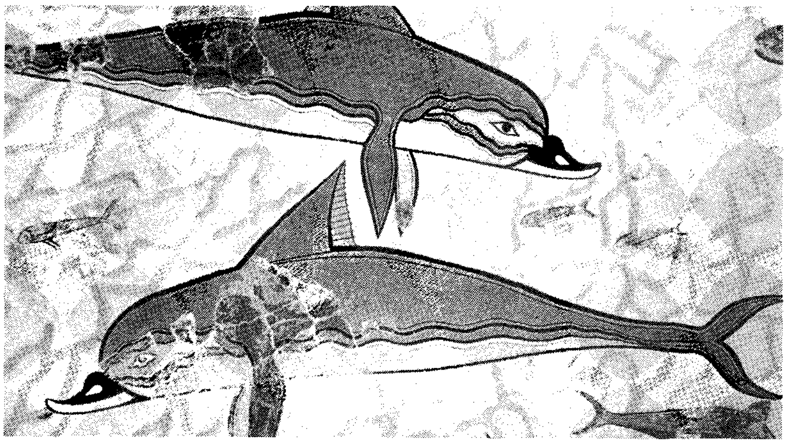

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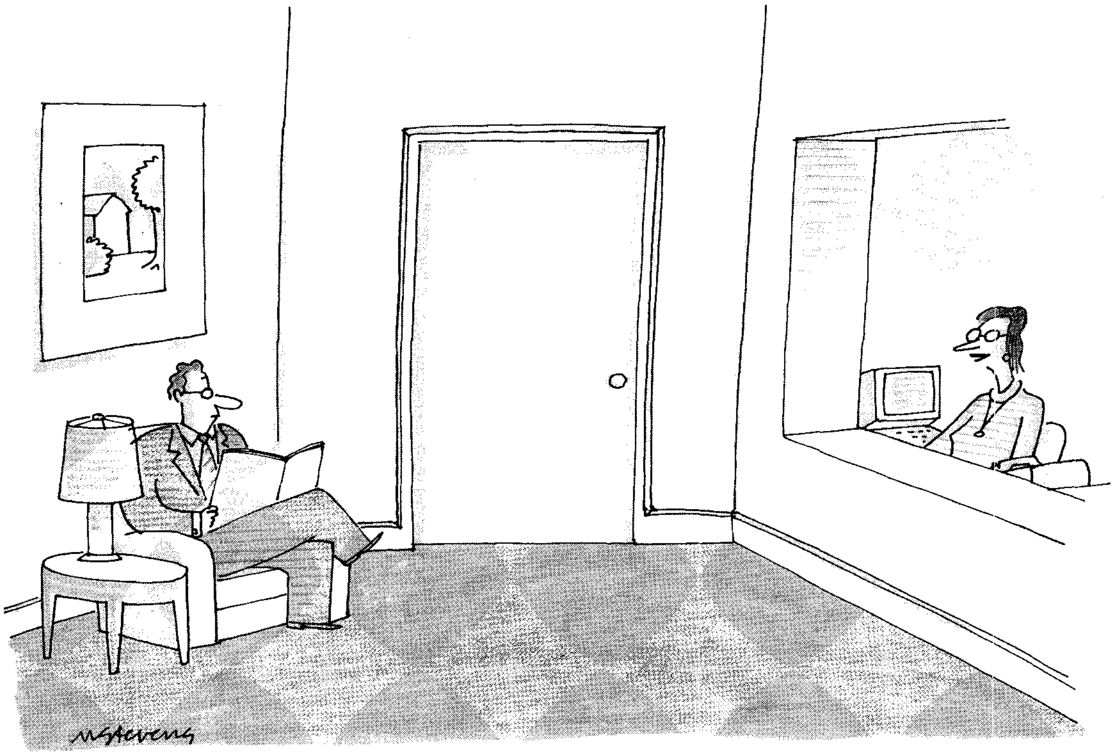
MUSICAL EVENTS

Schubert

THE second fit of the 92nd Street Y's great Schubertiade—a ten-year traversal of Schubert's complete works—was heard last month. In eight concerts, compositions from the spring of 1814 to the summer of 1815 were done: an almost complete run from D. 95 in Deutsch's Schubert catalogue, the song "Adelaide," to D. 244, the song "Willkommen, lieber schöner Mai"; a little cluster of slightly later part-songs; and the C-major piano sonata, D. 279. Strict chronology yielded to well-balanced programs, didacticism to delight. Twenty singers, six pianists, two string quartets, two choruses, and the New York Chamber Symphony took part. In those years, Schubert was seventeen and eighteen, teaching at his father's school. The period includes his second and third symphonies, his first and second Masses, piano music, string quartets, dances, and, above all, songs. Two special features of this year's fare were Schubert's earliest Goethe settings—some twenty Goethe songs were heard—and the ambitious, immense ballads, unwieldy for regular recital use, in which the young composer forged techniques that were refined in the late cycles. Goethe, the poet he was to turn to most often, inspired many of his finest songs. "Gretchen am Spinnrade," the first of them—and his first masterpiece—was composed on October 19, 1814. Three days earlier, he had had his first public performance: the F-major Mass. The "Schubert circle" began to form as he set poems by his friends and future roommates Johann Mayrhofer and Franz von Schober.

On a preliminary Schubertiade day, Malcolm Bilson, assisted by the baritone Sanford Sylvan, by a Derek Adlam replica of an 1814 piano by Nannette Streicher, and by—as Mr. Bilson put it—a modern Steinway replica of a late-nineteenth-century piano, discussed and demonstrated the relationship of Schubert's music to instruments of the kind that the composer knew. Robert Winter, with the tenor Timothy Mussard, discussed ornamentation in Schubert's songs, accompanying his examples on the fortepiano (by which term an eighteenth- or early-nineteenth-century instrument is now conveniently distinguished from the modern piano). I need no convincing that a fine player on a fine fortepiano, in a small hall, can bring Schubert's piano writing to life in ways unachievable on a modern grand: the timbres are clearer, bass and treble are in a different relationship, articulations can be cleaner. Anyone who doubts this might listen to Melvyn Tan's new CD recording (EMI) of the Impromptus, also played on a Streicher-Adlam instrument: as Mr. Tan remarks in the program note, "no iron frame, no extra octaves of resonating but unused strings, no thundering bass designed to fill great concert halls and compete with large orchestras" but "an all-wood, 6-octave fortepiano of simple 'Biedermeier' design ideal for home music in its lightness and intimacy, yet capable of gradations of tone colour ranging from crystal clarity to the ethereal, veiled quality made possible by the moderator pedal and *una corda*." If the Y demonstration was less satisfactory, that was partly because Mr. Bilson, as he explained, was still learning to live with his newly acquired fortepiano, and largely because Mr. Sylvan—sensitive artist though he is—and Mr. Mussard are resonant modern-American singers, trained to project to large audiences and accustomed to a Steinway's plump support. At the second concert, Jon Humphrey's light, clear tenor was a better match with the instrument; Mr. Bilson, in "Ballade," could make much of the gallant knight's fanfares, heard in the distance, then drawing ever closer, and could let the clangor of battle ring out fiercely without obscuring the singer. Each year of the Y Schubertiade, I hope, will bring increasing use of "original" instruments—and players of them able to do justice to the late symphonies, the late chamber music.

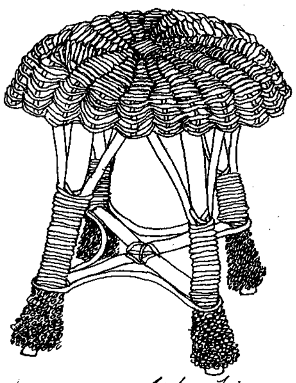


"The doctor will bill you now."

THE preliminary day also included a recital of a new kind, presented, on records, by Will Crutchfield: a public recital by singers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was opened by Gustav Walter, who was born in 1834 and, in 1904, recorded "Am Meer." George Henschel, born in 1850, recorded, most movingly, "Das Wandern" in 1914 and "Der Leiermann" in 1928. Harry Plunket Greene, born in 1865, recorded an even more moving "Hurdy-Gurdy Man" in 1934. Paul Knüpfer, born in 1866, recorded an emotionally knockout "Wanderer" in 1910. Others who took part in the recital were Emma Eames (a gleaming, poignant "Gretchen"), Leo Slezak (a captivating "Jüngling an der Quelle"), and—from outside the central tradition—Edmond Clément, Beniamino Gigli, and Sergei Lemeshev. We heard "Erlkönig" in Berlioz's orchestration, with (not Berlioz's idea) different singers taking the various parts. Friedrich Schorr's "Lindenbaum" was offered as an example of studio-orchestra horrors—glockenspiel touches, wind machine rustling the lime tree's leaves—but more important, I thought, was the sound of one of the most beautiful voices ever captured by the phonograph. By way of Ria Ginster, Karl Erb, Elisabeth Schumann, and Lotte Lehmann we moved to modern times: to Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, to a different approach to performing Schubert, to exploration beyond the famous songs, and to what is—in ways more easily heard than described—a different kind of vocalism. No doubt only limitations of time kept Mr. Crutchfield from including something by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, accompanied, perhaps, by Edwin Fischer. In his comments he did not neglect the pianists; ample tribute was paid to Gerald Moore.

If I dwell on this preliminary recital, it is because in many ways it provided a touchstone for the recitals that followed. The sound reproduction was excellent. Although the singers were not present in the flesh, the audience often applauded as if they were. The records were cunningly chosen, either to display Schubert singing of the past at its best or to make particular points. Two general conclusions could be drawn. First, whatever the language—German, French, Italian, Russian, English—almost every word could be heard. Plunket Greene's "Hurdy-Gurdy Man" made a powerful case for abandoning what the great American baritone David Bispham called the "foreign-language fad"—American singers' singing to an American audience in an exotic tongue. Second (and not unrelated), even the oldest singers represented—Walter at the age of seventy, Henschel at the age of seventy-eight, Plunket Greene at the age of sixty-eight—maintained a steadiness and purity of tone and a command of verbal and vocal line which put most of today's singers to shame. Hermann Prey, the instigator of the Schubertiade, who sang many of the songs this year, is only fifty-nine, but his voice has become rough and unwieldy. He did some beautiful and some clumsy things.

The most beautiful "live" voice to be heard was that of Kevin McMillan, a young Canadian baritone. With Warren Jones as pianist, he gave an account of "Amphiaraos," a heroic song, that was at once lyrical and noble. We must hear more of him. Schubert wrote many big songs at the start of his career: ballads, monologues, dramatic scenas, epic narratives. "Der Taucher," with its twenty-seven six-line stanzas, lasts nearly half an hour; Mr. Prey and the pianist Leonard Hokanson gave an exciting performance of it. "Adelwold und Emma," with thirty-four stanzas, mostly eight-line, lasts almost as long; Jon Garrison and Mr. Jones did it bravely, and they were even more vivid in the grim, grisly "Die Nonne." Other "megasongs" heard during these days were the "Ballade" already mentioned, "Romanze" (Mr. Prey and Mr. Hokanson), and "Minona" (Mary Ann Hart and Mr. Jones). Graham Johnson, the director of the Songmakers' Almanac, calls these pieces "Schubert's experiments with opera in the home." The composer sets the scenes, creates the characters, finds voices for them, expresses their feelings, depicts their actions, even suggests the lighting effects. Mr. Johnson likens the endeavor to the work of a film director: "Cutting and splicing, crowd scenes, special effects, long shots and zoom-lens closeups, miraculously instantaneous scene changes—all these are to be found in Schubert's ballads."



Too much richness for everything to be mentioned! The Tokyo String Quartet gave a poised account of the early B-flat quartet, D. 112. The F-major Mass, first performed at Congress of Vienna time, was followed by the alternative, more urgent setting of the "Dona nobis pacem" that Schubert added in April, 1815, when the Powers were once again in the field against Napoleon. The soloists, the Concert Chorale of New York, and the New York Chamber Symphony were conducted by Bruno Weil—whom last year's Schubertiade revealed, and this year's confirmed, to be one of the most pleasing and musical conductors to have come out of Europe in a long while. His Second Symphony was vivid. It was fascinating to hear the Cathedral Scene from "Faust," set for soprano, baritone, and piano. In the matter of real operas, the Schubertiade is falling behind. "Der Spiegelritter" was done last year, but now "Des Teufels Lustschloss," "Der Vierjährige Posten," "Fernando," and "Claudine von Villa Bella" are all overdue. Operas, even in concert performances, put a strain on money and time. Perhaps the Y could enlist the support of the music schools and persuade them to stage a Schubert opera or two at Schubertiade time. ("Der Vierjährige Posten" and "Fernando" are one-acters, and only the first act of "Claudine" was completed.) There was an ample program book, with full texts and translations, edited and annotated by Joseph Horowitz, and there was interesting material in the small Schubert exhibition in the coffee room adjacent to the hall.

MEANWHILE, another Schubertiade is in progress, planned for completion, like the Y's, in 1997, the bicentenary year. This is a complete CD recording of the songs, on the Hyperion label, distributed here by Harmonia Mundi. The nearest thing to a complete recording before was Fischer-Dieskau and Gerald Moore's set of twenty-nine LPs, which presented about five hundred of the songs, in chronological sequence, omitting only the hundred or so that cannot fitly be sung by a man. The bulky albums were valuable, and often wonderful, but also a shade daunting. They left the catalogue. Hyperion is going about things differently, using many singers,

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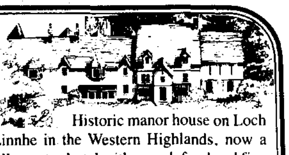
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each in a program of songs to which she or he is particularly suited, and in which both familiar and unfamiliar pieces figure. Two disks have appeared so far, one with Janet Baker and one with Stephen Varcoe. They have in common the excellent pianist Graham Johnson, who has planned the series, and who writes the enthusiastic and perceptive program notes.

Dame Janet's recital is of Schiller and Goethe songs. She is in fine voice. At the start, in "Der Jüngling am Bache," she may seem a shade heavy, but soon her boldness, her directness, and her command of hushed, intense tone (notably in "Meeres Stille") prove irresistible. There is one "big" song—"Die Erwartung," which lasts thirteen minutes and is almost a song cycle in itself. It is a marvellous, Tennysonian piece: as the lover waits in rapturous expectation, a startled bird, ripples from the lake where a swan glimmers, the scented air, moonrise, and much else appear in musical image. The binding thread of Mr. Varcoe's recital is unstated but is suggested by the cover picture of the young baritone as a *Jüngling am Bache:* all his songs have to do with streams, rivers, lakes, or the sea. No lack of choice there, and no lack of variety: opposed to the sparkling brooks is the thick, dull water of Lethe (in "Fahrt zum Hades"). The recital ends with a "Taucher" more intimate than Mr. Prey's was, not less impressive, and even more "pictorial."

Jonathan Harvey's "Tendril" (1987), which was given its American première at Speculum Musicae's Merkin Hall concert last month, is a strange piece, filled with sounds unheard before. The instruments are conventional—wind quintet, string quartet, double bass, and piano—but are used in unconventional ways: circular bowing; interrupted bowing so slow "that only one or two impulses sound at a time"; scarce-audible glissando traversals of the keyboard with the fingernails, the hammers unactivated; pitchless "wind tremolos" swelling and subsiding through the horn. The result is not a bag of tricks but music from a mind opened at IRCAM to rich new worlds of sound. A loud, wailing cry of incisive outline begins the work. Quarter tones and bold heterophony give an Oriental tinge to some passages. It is music now shrill, now stilly, then sparkly, which plays directly upon responsiveness to sound, not music to be received through the usual filters of form and tradition. It lasts about fourteen minutes. The title is from an E. E. Cummings line: "luminous tendril of celestial wish." A mysterious, exciting composition.

The concert began with Stefan Wolpe's "From Here on Farther" (1969), in which neo-Baroque ideas mate fruitfully with Wolpe's uncompromising, energetic genius. (There is a good Continuum recording, on Nonesuch.) Then came the first performance of George Edwards' "Parallel Convergences," composed for Speculum. I didn't make much of it; the word "academic" crossed my mind. The concert ended with Andrew Imbrie's "Pilgrimage" (1983), which the New York New Music Ensemble played here in 1984. As before, I was captivated by the way each of its movements begins and ends, by bell sounds, by sudden striking statements, yet found my attention slipping during some rather dogged developments. Perhaps the Edwards and Imbrie compositions needed more ardent championship. Worries about Speculum that surfaced at its previous, Carter-birthday-celebration concert were not allayed. Once upon a time, its performances had such fire and conviction that even bad pieces could sound good. Nowadays, it seems sometimes that the fire has burned low, that the sparks no longer fly, that the busy, expert professionals, content to have got difficult notes and tricky rhythms right, have lost their old urge to make each member of an audience hang spellbound on each turn of the music that they play. At this concert, the dynamic levels of the Wolpe, Edwards, and Imbrie pieces were somewhat narrow. Only "Tendril" inspired fervent advocacy. At Speculum's next Merkin concert, in April, it plays new pieces by Andrew Mead and Larry Bell, and Jean Barraqué's stunning "Séquence."

Harvey's fifty-minute "Bhakti," for fifteen players and tape, which I wrote about with enthusiasm after its American première, given in 1987 by Parnassus, is now available, on compact disk or cassette tape, in an excellent performance by the British group Spectrum, as the first release on the NMC label, to be distributed by Harmonia Mundi.

—Andrew Porter

THE THEATRE

Easy Virtue

Isabella, the heroine of "Measure for Measure," is a girl who is either so pious or so repressed (depending on how you look at it) that she would rather lose her brother than her virginity. This makes "Measure for Measure" first and foremost a play of ideas, a meditation on the question of how virtuous virtue really is.

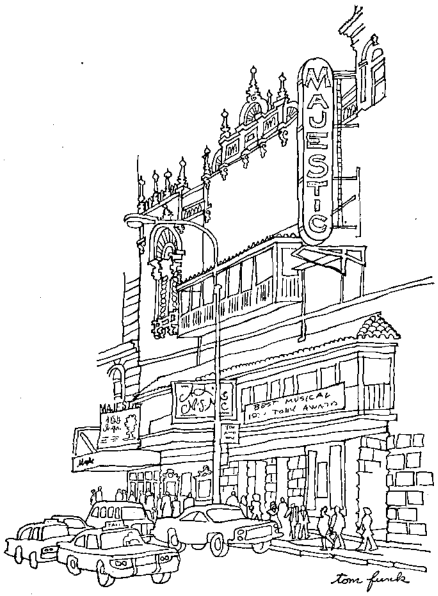
Shakespeare's point about absolute virtue, embodied in the figure of the celibate or the puritan, is that virtue set apart from the rest of the world is frail: unversed in the ways of evil, it cannot withstand evil, so what good is it to anyone?

Of the three principal characters in "Measure for Measure," two want to set themselves apart from the rest of humanity, either literally or figuratively. Isabella, when the play opens, is entering a convent. Angelo, left to govern Vienna in the place of the absent Duke, is a man who "scarce confesses that his blood flows; or that his appetite is more to bread than stone." The third character, Duke Vincentio himself, belongs to that class of Shakespearean rulers who have trouble wielding authority. (The Duke would rather play peekaboo with his subjects than govern them.) All three have to learn something about evil: Angelo has to discover the potential for evil in himself, Isabella has to discover the potential for evil in others, and the Duke has to discover the potential for evil in the world.

The production of "Measure for Measure" that opened March 9th at Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre is without doubt the most boring I have seen. Directed by Mark Lamos, of the Hartford Stage, it combines a Cliffs Notes reading of the play with lead performances from two of the blandest actors in the English-speaking theatre. Mr. Lamos may understand "Measure for Measure," but he seems uninterested in any of the ideas the play deals with. His production, which falls back on the hackneyed notion of identifying the world of the play with contemporary, graffiti-covered New York, tries to find modern equivalents for the characters in the play rather than trying to dramatize or explore their moral relationship.

The opening scene is a case in point. The Duke's first lines pose a moral problem, raising the question of his efficacy as a leader of men. "Escalus," says the Duke, to one of his appointed viceroys. "My lord," the other replies. What the Duke proceeds to say, in very tortuous syntax, is that there's no point in his talking about the nature of good government, since Escalus knows more about it than he does. Lamos's direction, instead of answering the questions the Duke's statement raises (Does he *mean* what he's saying? Is he unfit to govern? If not, why does he feel that he is?), distracts the audience with technological business. "Escalus," says the Duke, pushing a button on a telephone console, whereupon Escalus enters. But in terms of how we are to regard the moral content of what the Duke actually goes on to say, the audience is left entirely in the dark.

This "Measure for Measure" looks and plays, in fact, like a standard Papp production: in the roles of Isabella and the Duke it casts two well-known actors (Kate Burton and Len Cariou) who prove inadequate to the occasion; as the bawd, Pompey, the principal comic role, it casts a well-known movie actor (Jack Weston) who can be relied on to perform shtick. Mr. Lamos even draws on Papp's stable of actors: Bradley Whitford, who played Paris in "Romeo and Juliet" and here plays Claudio; Reggie Montgomery, from "The Colored Museum," who is miscast as Lucio; Lorraine Toussaint, who played Titania in the Brazilian "Midsummer Night's Dream" and here plays Mariana; and Deryl Caitlyn, who appeared as part of the ensemble in Steven Berkoff's "Coriolanus" and here plays an officious Provost. There's nothing terrible about any of them—though Thomas Ikeda's attention-grabbing performance as the malapropistic constable Elbow is pretty awful, but sometimes Lamos's "conceptualizing" actually tampers with the values of the play. The wronged Mariana is got up to look like an Eighth Avenue hooker; Ethyl Eichelberger's Froth is a top-hatted, drunken reveller right out of "My Man Godfrey," rather than a wealthy young man being corrupted and taken advantage of. As Mistress Overdone, Lois Smith seems utterly undirected, while Campbell Scott, who gives us a lot of showy chin-trembling as a very young Angelo, comes across far too soon as a closet rapist. (Can any man with slicked-back hair wearing pens in his shirt pocket really be trusted?)



Miss Burton and Mr. Cariou, like the others, just don't seem to be inhabiting the world of the play. Miss Burton, who gives Isabella a plodding wholesomeness untempered by anything else, seems not to know what she is saying much of the time, while Mr. Cariou—who I thought was bland even wielding a razor in "Sweeney Todd"—plays the Duke like the avuncular sidekick of a Jane Austen hero. His deliveries vacillate between the meaningless and the sententious.

I don't know why Gregory Mosher saw fit to produce a "Measure for Measure," or why, having decided to do so, he felt he had to call in Mr. Lamos to direct it; you would never know from such a bloodless and soporific production that this is one of Shakespeare's most complex, provocative, and passionate plays.

—Mimi Kramer

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SENTENCES WE HATED TO COME TO THE END OF

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PERSONAL HISTORY

IMPALPABLE DUST

ALL of us have some quirky bit of knowledge that represents, for us, a fragile link across the generations. Sometimes it is the almost ceremonial introduction to a commonplace bit of wisdom: "As my father used to say . . . " Sometimes it is a prayer in a foreign language, or a fairy tale from a distant country. It can even be a simple rule of social behavior that is in fact not universal yet is still unquestioned, still understood as the right way to behave or the proper thing to say in a given social context. Somehow, my quirky bit of knowledge is an old textbook definition of Portland cement.

My father was a civil engineer, and could build anything if you gave him the plans and the money—tall buildings, long bridges, airfields, anything at all. I was always incompetent at subjects more mathematical than long division, so he couldn't teach me his craft. But once, even before I reached the age of decimal points, he taught me a formal definition of cement, that gray powder which is mixed with water and stones and sand to make concrete. This is what I learned: "Portland cement is a mixture of argillaceous and calcareous substances heated to incipient fusion and ground to a palpable dust." All that means is that it is a mixture of clayey shales and limestone rocks melted in a furnace until it fuses together and then is ground into a very fine powder. He told me that "palpable" meant very fine, something like baby powder or ashes, so fine that it would float when you sprinkled it on the surface of the water.

That is the intent of the definition, but between the two of us, or by just one of us, we got it wrong. The old Latinate definition should read "*im*palpable dust," for that is what it is. It is a dust so fine that you cannot feel it when it is rubbed between your fingers—that is what "impalpable" means.

Not being mathematical or scientific, I still always liked his words, although I seldom understood the technical meanings. There is very little poetry in civil engineering besides "impalpable dust." I also enjoyed the phrase for the natural slope that a pile of dirt or sand or gravel will assume if it is simply dumped in a heap or pushed over the edge of a high place and left to lie as it will. This is called "the angle of repose." That last word is an odd one, not much heard in ordinary speech, and usually reserved as that state for which we pray in regard to the souls of the dead. It is possible to overcome the tendency of dirt to achieve its natural angle, but that can also lead to problems, which is why civil engineers worry about something as odd as reposing dirt.

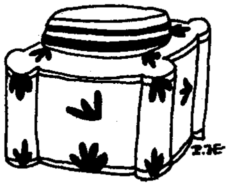
After my father was dead, and the dust, as we learned in Sunday school, had returned to the earth that gave it (although, in his case, to the sea), I was moved to explore a period of my father's life before my first memories. It was a time of grave professional responsibility for him; men could die because of an engineer's error. And men did die—although it was none of his doing—during the construction of the Fort Peck Dam, a Works Progress Administration project in eastern Montana, the country where we both were born. I wanted to try to make some sense out of his life, which was a life not unlike that of so many men of his generation—a mixture of independence, association, and, finally, loneliness.

Fort Peck Dam is a short twenty-minute detour south of U.S. 2, a highway used by a few tourists coming out of North Dakota and headed for Glacier National Park, but it's best to come up from the south on Montana State Highway 24, from Miles City. There isn't much to see, other than a small roadside rest at the intersection of Highway 24 and Highway 200, where a big, faded black-on-white sign encourages you to go "just an hour north" to see "Fort Peck Dam, One of the Civil Engineering Monuments of America and the World's Largest Earth Filled Dam." Actually, the dam is neither a monument nor the largest, and the sign is a mixture of typical Montana boastfulness and outdated information. I don't know if anyone ever actually takes the advice, for the crossroads sign is miles from the next gas station. Any hints of population and progress seem to evaporate as you approach the dam. The first to go are the electric wires, and, with their poles gone, the telephone lines dive underground, buried next to the cattle fence, marked every half mile by a solitary post where the cable comes up out of the ground so the linemen can check it. And then the fence disappears, and the highway rolls on without any boundary except the drainage ditches and a few green weeds growing just at the edge of the asphalt and in the bottom of the ditches. What little rain falls is effectively multiplied as it drains off the crown of the macadam, and small green plants flourish where the asphalt meets the dirt—annual sunflowers, mostly.

Highway 24 heads more or less perfectly north. That's true north, not magnetic north, because it, like so many roads from Ohio to Oregon, is laid out to surveyors' standards, what country people call "section roads" whether or not they happen to mark the boundary of a land-grant section of six hundred and forty acres—one square mile, one thirty-sixth of a township. East-west section roads can run straight forever, but north-south roads have to be readjusted periodically, as the lines of true north converge at the pole. The surveyors have to make offset sections, compromising the reality of a square mile with the inevitable tendency of the north-south lines to approach each other. This explains the presence of jogs in the road unforced by any natural feature. It is a sweeping curve, rather than any road sign, that alerts the northbound driver that he is approaching the Missouri, and as the automobile comes out of the curve the white concrete structure of the Fort Peck spillway glistens in the distance. At night, it is lighted with the first street lights in sixty miles.

Most visitors from the south assume, as I did, that the spillway, which carries the highway on segmented columns, is the dam itself. We have a general concept, an archetype, of a dam in our mind. Dams bridge narrow gaps, are made of concrete, and are broad enough to support a two-lane highway. It is this ancillary spillway structure, photographed in its half-completed state, that makes up the cover of the first issue of *Life*, published in 1936. Spillways are usually built directly onto concrete dams, at one side or the other, where they can discharge excess water without damage to the structure. With an earth-filled dam, such as this one, where a rush of water near the dam would erode it, one builds a separate and distant drainage to escort water safely around the softer material of the dam itself.

Visitors coming down to Fort Peck from the north usually drive across the earth dam without realizing that they are motoring on this marvel of civil engineering that the State of Montana has encouraged them to visit. If you happen to be standing at the roadside, atop the dam, a motorist may stop and ask you where it is.



Fort Peck City, downstream from the dam, has the odd distinction of being the first planned community in the United States, discounting only more exotic places such as military reservations or small religious settlements. Like the dam and the spillway, it was drawn first and then built. Every detail of the community was as firmly fixed on paper as the geometry of the dam before a shovelful was turned. Everything, all the way from street plans to the cupola on the movie theatre, was sketched, approved, and bluelined by architects in the Kansas City, Missouri, office of the Army Corps of Engineers during the summer of 1933. Like housing built a dozen years later, after the war, the town was mass-produced, but with variations in external decoration to create the illusion of variety. The streets were curved, not rectilinear, to give an impression of spontaneity and to conform somewhat to the contours of the landscape. The entire city was the creation of Henry Tanner, a Kansas City architect who had gone bust in the Depression and had ended up working for the Army Corps of Engineers. He is famous in the world of architecture not for Fort Peck but for designing the Country Club development in Kansas City, which featured the first automobile-oriented shopping center. Fort Peck also acknowledged the automobile: each of the houses had a garage, although electrified and attached garages were a privilege restricted to the twelve regular Army officers who lived in the dozen permanent houses; the two hundred and eighty temporary houses had detached garages. Tanner never got any real national publicity for his town planning. Indeed, it was the growth of the boomtowns around Fort Peck City that got the attention, and of these Wheeler was the kingpin. Wheeler boasted paved roads, its own deputized sheriff's department, and the Riding Academy, which had nothing to do with horses and would, by a quirk of journalism, make Fort Peck Dam famous. My father's house was one of the temporary single-family dwellings. Every one of them is gone now, many of them hauled off the townsite and turned into utility buildings on scattered ranches. Montana ranchers, having a surplus of space and a minimum of cash, never throw anything away, and collect anything that's not tied down. What once were homes have become chicken coops, toolsheds, and bunkhouses. On Highway 24, just at the turnoff to Fort Peck, a small motel is composed entirely of old temporary houses, with steeply pitched roofs and small false-dormered windows in

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the imaginary second story. The illusion is of a set of miniature Swiss chalets that got lost.

Over in the town itself, the Swiss-chalet motif, mixed with some Carpenter's Gothic details, sets the style for the employees' hotel (still in business), and the theatre, which once showed movies twenty-four hours a day, catering to the laborers who worked three shifts all summer and most of the winter. Carpenter's Gothic decorates the old hospital (now divided into apartments), the Lutheran Church, and the town recreation hall. All these buildings look as if they'd been picked up out of a well-wooded mountain resort and dropped, quite by accident, on a dry and barren plain. Besides these public spaces, the dozen permanent houses survive from the nineteen-thirties, built then for the officers who managed the dam's construction, and still occupied by some of the Corps of Engineer employees who maintain the dam. These are designed in a style that is officially designated by the National Register of Historic Places as "Cottage Picturesque." The picturesque part is a series of veneers applied to the street-facing sides of the two-story cottages. One has round cobbles mortared together, another dressed fieldstones, a third is brick, a fourth has exposed wood and stucco in the Queen Anne style. Each is different, unlike the temporaries.

The other remaining structure from the nineteen-thirties is a stolid two-story office with solid concrete walls and a tile roof—the Administration Building. Even here, the architect had the opportunity for minor detailing, for subtle additions that make it different from cheaper, modern construction. The exterior wooden forms were made of sandblasted tongue-and-groove boards, so that the grain of the wood is permanently captured in bas-relief by the concrete, and the groove provides a series of parallel extruded lines that break up the smooth surface. The effect—the grain and the bands of the grooves—is a way of denying that the building is simply concrete, by creating the illusion, a sort of physical memory, of the wooden forms. In the full and commodious basement of the headquarters is the operational archive, the historical files of Fort Peck, as collected by the Corps of Engineers, plus a few rooms occupied by the local offices of the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Reclamation.

When I told my mother that I would be visiting Fort Peck, I asked her if she could remember the street address of our house. She was not sure about the number but was quite clear about one thing. "It was on West Kansas," she said, "which was in the better part of town." That was the first and, so far, the only good thing I ever heard about Fort Peck from my mother.

There were then, and are now, only a couple of dozen houses on that side of town. It was all officer country, where the twelve permanent houses still stand. It also had fifteen of the temporary houses, but they had endless back yards, and were set much farther apart than the other two hundred and sixty-five temporaries across town. From a planner's chair, the permanent officers' houses had the best view, toward the river and the dam being built across it. The view from West Kansas, on the architect's plot plan, should have been of far and endless rolling prairie. Perhaps, from the perspective of Kansas City, that landscape would be covered with purple sage and bathed each evening in the glow of the setting sun.

Recently, following a directive of the Office of Management and Budget, federal towns like Fort Peck, including ones built near other dams downstream on the Missouri, are being reorganized into proper private-property villages. The residents, instead of paying rent, are being offered a chance to buy their government-built houses and join the mainstream. Most of the houses in Fort Peck were sold within two years, but there were, the last time I was there, five in a row that didn't sell. They were all on West Kansas, and included our old house, at 1137. The reason is pretty obvious. There's nothing between West Kansas Street and the North Pole, and the winter wind blows directly on the front door and the living-room windows, howling down from Alberta. And the afternoon summer sun beats on the same front door and windows. It was truly the better part of town, but only as drawn in Kansas City.

West Kansas had other problems, as a neighborhood, back in the nineteen-thirties. The trouble with planned communities is they may have strangers outside the pale, and the view from West Kansas was toward the most notorious of all possible neighbors.

When money for Fort Peck was authorized by the Public Works Administration in 1933, the Corps of Engineers envisioned a city occupied by older professionals, mostly civil engineers and other experts, plus a large labor force composed of local residents and of unmarried or unaccompanied construction workers. The original town plan had vast dormitories where itinerant or single workers would be housed. That was not to be the case, as federal planning ran into state regulations.

Of all the possible sites where the Corps of Engineers could have spent money in the Missouri River Basin, from Kansas up through the Dakotas to Montana, Fort Peck was chosen as a favor to Montana's senior senator, Burton K. Wheeler, who was a Democrat and a staunch ally of any New Deal scheme to increase employment. Wheeler also insisted that preference in hiring at Fort Peck be given to Montana residents. And Montana law, as it was applied to hiring for public-works projects, required that heads of families be given preference over single men.

So it was that more than two thousand married eastern Montana dirt farmers who had never built anything larger than a barn or dug anything deeper than a well were hired to build the largest earthen dam in the history of the world. Local workers commuted, carpooling from Glasgow and Nashua, the only settled towns in the area, but the rest moved into shanty towns that surrounded Fort Peck City, the largest taking the name of the senator who brought them work. From 1137 West Kansas Street, in the better part of Fort Peck, you could see the lights of Wheeler glimmering above the east abutment of the dam. At the time of peak employment—the winter of 1938—Wheeler had four hundred and ninety-eight houses, eighty-three business buildings, two schools, and its own electric-light plant. It was nearly twice the size of Fort Peck City, and considerably livelier. Wheeler, you see, had all the whorehouses and most of the saloons. All told, there were almost fifteen hundred tar-papered, board-and-batten houses scattered, in twelve boomtowns, outside the more pristine confines of Fort Peck City, and they attracted more attention than the orderly government town.

That the centerpiece of all this was such a massive dam is something I knew early in life. My father, who was not given to casual conversation, did on occasion try to enter into my patently childish world. One of the books we owned, and the one I adored above all others at the age of twelve, was an adventure book by Richard Halliburton. It was called "The Royal Road to Romance" and included a picture of Halliburton standing on his head in front of Cheops' pyramid. Somehow, probably in regard to Cheops' pyramid, the subject of the Wonders of the World came up, and my father said, "The Chicago sewage system is one of the Seven Civil Engineering Wonders of the World. They made the Chicago River run backwards." My father liked to include factual material in our conversations. After a pause, he added, "The Fort Peck Dam isn't."

And I said, "Why should it be?"

"Because it's the largest earth-filled dam in the world."

And I said, "Oh."

It has never even made the list of National Historic Civil Engineering Landmarks, which are a considerable cut beneath the Seven Civil Engineering Wonders. This is probably because it is located in a state of low employment, civil engineering or otherwise; the Historic Landmarks are nominated by the membership of the American Society of Civil Engineers. And it may be, in part, because although it is very large, it was not very cleverly designed or technically difficult to construct. And since the dam proper contains no Portland cement or any structural steel, it gets no support from the cement lobby or the steel manufacturers.

Besides Chicago's famous sewage system, the other six Civil Engineering Wonders are the Colorado River Aqueduct, the Empire State Building, the Grand Coulee Dam and its associated Columbia Basin Project, the Hoover Dam, the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge (not to be confused with the Golden Gate Bridge), and the Panama Canal. When you consider what's missing from the list, I suspect my father was wrong to believe Fort Peck was a Civil Engineering Wonder. The dam is no more marvellous than the unlisted Brooklyn Bridge, nor is it as useful as the honored Colorado River Aqueduct, without which there simply is no Southern California. Fort Peck Dam is only a Montana Historic Civil Engineering Landmark.

LOCAL DELIVERY

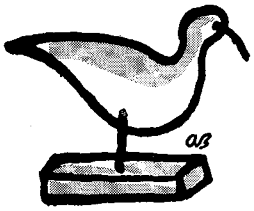
RAW landscape, except to a geologist, has no significance. But if you can imagine the banks of the Missouri studded with appalling hovels and also with orderly town streets, the riverbed and the benches near the river swarming with men and machinery, your vision of this place will be clarified if I explain the geography in some detail. Then, as you understand the lay of the land, certain events still unrelated will be apprehended in their real significance.

First, the Missouri River, which is subject to great extremes of flooding—a mixed blessing that periodically destroyed riverside settlements but also created silted bottomlands that are great producers of crops, particularly alfalfa and grains, in ordinary years. The average flow of water at Fort Peck is nine thousand five hundred cubic feet per second—an ungainly measurement not meaningful to the average citizen. It translates into some forty-two million gallons of water each minute. A typical garden hose delivers something on the order of 4.2 gallons per minute, so, if the trivial appeals to you, think of ten million garden hoses all running at once. The river's maximum at spring flood rises to six hundred and eighty-five million gallons a minute, or a hundred and sixty-three million garden hoses.

The Missouri drops slowly, cutting across a reasonably level plain, averaging just a foot of descent per mile. As slow-moving rivers will do, it cuts great loops across the land—oxbows they're called, from the open oval shape of the wooden yokes of ox teams. Often, after an aeon or two, the river will cut back a straight line across the loop, making it an even more accurate representation of the ox's harness, which has a straight yoke lying across the back of the beast's neck, into which the open ends of the oxbow are inserted from below. Fort Peck is on the north-flowing side of a great upsidedown oxbow, and the dam thus runs parallel to the over-all course of the eastflowing river. If you were to draw a straight line across the bottom of this oxbow, where the river would have run had it not meandered, you would be marking the path of an existing shallow depression, a gap in the rolling hills. Through this natural gap, which is almost certainly an old riverbed, the Corps of Engineers built a side channel, the flood-relieving spillway.

The high plains of eastern Montana are composed largely of sedimentary rocks, and rather young, soft ones—sandstones and shales. The land is somewhat folded and contorted, but upthrusts of completely metamorphosed and very hard material are widely scattered. The Missouri cuts and then tumbles most of its river bottom into sand and mud. Real rock, in the form of gravel and field boulders, was brought in ninety miles by Great Northern railroad and a spur line from Cole, Montana, a town that no longer exists. Quarried granite riprap for the upstream face of the dam, placed to keep wave action and ice from eroding the soft earth fill of the structure, was hauled a hundred and thirty miles from near Chinook (pronounced "Shin-ook"), close to the Canadian border. The bulk of the dam itself could be, and was, found within ten miles of the dam, in the riverbed and ancient floodplain, both upstream and down. It was judged at the time to be adequate soil for construction.

The available material dredged up and poured in place to make the dam was a mixture of Missouri River mud and sand, the mud a fine and flocculent material mixed with sand and a little gravel, easy to dredge, excellent for making a solid and impervious embankment, but slow to drain its natural water, slow to set up, slow to firm into the world's largest hydraulically filled dam. It used to be the world's largest *earth*-filled dam, when I was a child. Then the Russians built a bigger one, and now the Pakistanis have finished one even bigger. But it remains the largest pile of earth ever dredged, ever moved by pumping water, and, because of the difficulty of controlling the quality of a hydraulic-fill dam, it will never be surpassed. No engineer in his right mind would suggest a similar dam today. Indeed, the very difficulties of properly constructing the Fort Peck Dam by the dredging method almost destroyed the project, took eight lives, and preyed on the minds of those civil engineers who believed, after the disaster, that it could have and should have been prevented. It is precisely so that you can understand this calamity that I will write about dirt and rock and mud and sand.



For a few million years, at the end of the age of dinosaurs, and in the age of their decline, the Western volcanoes spewed ash day and night and blew apart most horribly, showering the eastward plains and what was then an inland sea around what would become Fort Peck with the finest ash. Two particular mineral formations resulted, one found in great volume, the other more scattered and, like most rarer things, more valuable. Both derive their names from the typeplace where they were first collected, both Montana names. Together, these minerals caused most of the difficulty in building the Fort Peck Dam, and when culprits were required to explain certain catastrophes yet to be related, these two conglomerations of ancient volcanic ejecta took all the official blame.

Bentonite—named after Fort Benton, near Great Falls, a few hundred miles west of and upstream from Fort Peck—is the rarer mineral. It is a white material, usually found in thin seams between other sediments, and is composed of an extraordinarily fine crystalline ash rarely ejected by volcanoes. Mixed with water, bentonite makes a slurry of extraordinary slipperiness. All mud, by definition, is such fine dirt that it becomes greasy when wet, and bentonite is the slickest dirt in the world.

The seams of bentonite in eastern Montana permeate a larger class of volcanic silts—shales and slates. Dried mud is not a rock, to put it in simple but hardly trivial terms. Becoming a rock requires heat and pressure and time, and the heat is created by the pressure of overlying rock and soil and the time is unimaginable millions of years. The most characteristic and problematic shale in the area of Fort Peck is called Bear Paw shale, after the isolated small mountain range that pokes up out of the plains just south of Chinook. If shale is by definition a rock, Bear Paw shale is misnamed. It is the youngest of the massive banks of volcanic sediment, the last layer applied to the floor of the old inland ocean, and very slightly buried by later windblown dunes become sandstone, and by shallow loess soils. So lightly covered was it that no great pressure and thus no serious heat was applied to it.

In large measure, Fort Peck Dam sits on Bear Paw shale, the enormous concrete spillway is cut through it, and the four outlet tunnels are bored inside it, but it is a desperately difficult foundation. It was also invisible, if not unknown, when the site was first casually surveyed in 1933, for either it was completely buried under the rubble of the Missouri River's old floodplains or it had disguised itself. Say, rather, it was transmuted, for, whatever rock-like qualities Bear Paw shale possesses, it loses them rapidly on exposure to open air. As I say, it is hardly a rock at all but more of a plastic material, still containing a residue of the ancient ocean in which it was deposited, more glued together than truly petrified, and the glue, improbably, is water.

Dug from the earth that has covered it these last sixty or seventy million years, Bear Paw shale is hard but penetrable, like dried-up schoolroom modelling clay or a bed of soft coal. Left out to dry for even an hour, or overnight, a chunk of Bear Paw shale will harden perceptibly, with a glazed and cracked surface, lightly dusted with a fine ash. It seems to have improved, to have hardened, to be more of a rock, but if you drop this newly dried, hard lump into a glass of ordinary tap water it crumbles instantly, and if you reach into the glass and feel the shale it slips between your fingers, more a lubricant than a bit of earth. The engineers at Fort Peck would find ways to deal with Bear Paw shale; they would learn to cope with it, to protect it, to build on it, but never to trust it or admire it.

Bear Paw shale caused a number of deaths at Fort Peck. Although it appears, when cut into by machinery, to be a solid mass, it is faulted with microscopic cracks and planes of shearing, and workmen on two or three occasions were simply crushed when a solid-looking wall of shale "calved," in the manner of an iceberg falling off a glacier. Those are the deaths recorded in the official papers of the Corps of Engineers. By far the larger number of deaths—not recorded as work-related—were caused by tunnelling operations in the Bear Paw, using modified coal saws. Although the shale is imperceptibly fine, when ground up it is abrasive, and the common cause of death was what the nurses in the Glasgow general hospital came to call "tunnel pneumonia." The tunnel miners, with lungs already distressed by years of coal mining or hard-rock drilling, would contract a pneumonia—this was years before penicillin or useful sulfa drugs had been developed—and would check into the hospital and be dead in twenty-four hours. That was what made it "tunnel pneumonia": ordinary pneumonia patients took a few days, sometimes a week, to die.

THE primary function of the Fort Peck Dam, after you scrape away all the official cost-benefit analysis, was to keep Franklin Delano Roosevelt on the good side of Senator Burton K. Wheeler. That the dam made it possible for my parents to afford two children then, of whom I am the second, is of no importance except that we are exemplary of several hundred eastern Montana children born to parents who could afford at least minimal medical care and baby food, right there smack in the middle of the most destitute countryside and the worst years of the Great Depression. The Works Progress Administration was the source of the funds, as it was for flood control and irrigation dams throughout the South and Far West, as well as everything from improved roads to high-school gymnasiums, and even music auditoriums. How it happened to come to Montana, besides the desire of the President to cosset Senator Wheeler, is a story that begins with a political organization in Iowa, that rich farm state on the east bank of the Missouri River, hundreds of miles downstream from Fort Peck. Farmers in western Iowa wanted stable river levels, which would allow them to plow and plant on the ordinarily dry, rich ground of the maximum floodplain of the Missouri. In those days, however, the Army Corps of Engineers was not interested in, was not congressionally charged with, agricultural considerations. Its business—and in this it was a forerunner of the Department of Defense's Interstate Highway Program—was to provide navigable rivers for the transportation of foodstuffs and military equipment in times of national emergency for the nation's defense.

So it was, with a small eye on cheap barge transportation and a wide-open eye on flood control, that the Missouri River Navigation Association of Sioux City, Iowa, organized ten thousand Midwestern farmers into a lobby dedicated to building a major dam up there, somewhere, high above them on the river. It was a questionable deal, and would have seemed so then if it could have been seen from some yet unimagined orbiting satellite. Approximately a quarter-million acres of downstream farmland in Nebraska and Iowa would be spared occasional flooding, while a quarter-million acres of Montana bottomland would be inundated for all eternity or until the dam broke, whichever came first.

This project would be justified, however, following the longstanding mission of the Corps of Engineers, not as flood control per se but for the storage and scheduled release of enough water to maintain an average dependable minimum depth of six feet at Sioux City, for transportation. After the project was approved and funded, on the direct authority of the Works Progress Administration, meaning with the President's signature and not by an act of Congress directly, the Corps concluded that it could probably maintain a minimum of eight feet on the Missouri during "navigation season"—those months when the Big Muddy wasn't covered with ice from bank to bank. Roosevelt thus managed, with a single project, to reward his best Western ally in the Senate and mollify tens of thousands of Depression-hurt farmers in the central Midwest.

It was, then, by an accident of politics that the Fort Peck project came to eastern Montana, but it could not have been sited better if the sole purpose had been to drop ten thousand jobs in a place of appalling poverty. Rural poverty, unlike urban, is difficult to see from a passing train or through the windshield of an automobile, and eastern Montana's poverty was practically invisible. The last dirt farmers to survive the great droughts of the nineteen-twenties and the collapse of commodity prices that lasted into the nineteen-thirties were widely scattered, miles from railroad lines and highways, electric lights and telephones, hidden in the coulees. Statistics were largely unavailable. In the nineteen-thirties, relief agencies were not pro-

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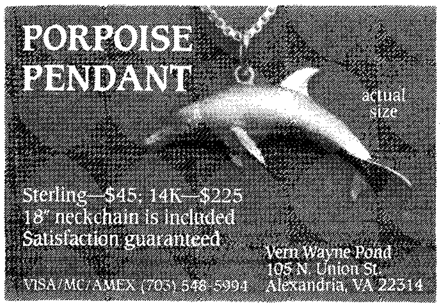
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fessional number-crunchers; indeed, they barely existed except as dolers of food and listers of rare job offers. I have no way of expressing how devastating it was to be poor in Valley, McCone, Blaine, Garfield—the four counties closest to the Fort Peck project. But there is one telling example from Valley, which in 1933 counted just eighteen hundred farm families scattered over five thousand square miles. Of the eighteen hundred, more than half were getting weekly food relief from the American Red Cross, and the Red Cross responded, then as now, only to disasters, not to mere privation. In simple terms, half the farm families in the county were literally starving, or—I can say this, knowing something of them—half were willing to admit it.

My father wasn't starving, or my mother, either, in 1933, when That Man, as F.D.R. was called in our household, decided to authorize the world's largest earthen dam. But they were not immune to the fourteen-year-old Depression that had settled on the plains. My mother grew up on a dirt farm—no running water, no indoor toilet, no electricity—in Garfield County, which is in the exact middle of the most godforsaken country in North America. Eventually, she went down to Miles City and worked as what is today called an "au pair" girl—a nice way of saying that you get to wash a lot of dirty clothes and dirty floors and go to high school. After she graduated, she carried on, still doing housework, and attended a two-year registered-nursing program at the local Catholic hospital. When it was done, she had a chance at economic and social respectability. You still had to be lucky, in Montana, to get a job. Hers was with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, nursing in the government hospital at Lame Deer, on the Northern Cheyenne reservation.

My father, a civil-engineering graduate of Iowa State College, class of 1928, was running a road crew for Winston Brothers, a Minneapolis contractor working for the State of Montana. Repairing country roads was about the only private civil-engineering work available in 1932. He came down the road with a repair crew, discovered and married my mother, and moved into her apartment, an ell attached to the grocery store in Lame Deer. And then Roosevelt, the Works Progress Administration, and Burton K. Wheeler accidentally made them virtually rich, by the standards of eastern Montana.

A FEW years ago, all I knew was that my father had worked on the Fort Peck Dam. I started telephoning around the country, trying to locate the physical records, the actual archives, of the project. One day, on the telephone with the Omaha District Office of the Army Corps of Engineers, speaking with their official historian, I explained what I was looking for, and said that it was important to me because my father had been a civil engineer and had had some official position, I thought, on the project. And the historian was most unsure whether there was a scrap of physical evidence left that would mean anything. "Civil engineer," he said. "Hell, so were a lot of people. Work was hard to find, and they had civil engineers running rods." He said it all kindly enough, but I knew that running rods is just about as low as you can get on the engineering ladder. It means holding the level rod, or plumb bob, or survey rod, while someone looks at it through a transit, or level—and even looking through the optical instrument is not really proper work for a graduate civil engineer. A long time ago, my first job was running rods, and I was fourteen years old and couldn't have engineered a goldfish pond in a frost-free environment. What the man said about rodmen didn't sit quite right, and I didn't believe it.

We have forgotten, in this service-industry, computer-driven age, that engineers once carried authority, that great civil works were not regarded with suspicion, that changing the landscape was the patriotic thing to do. There were popular novels about engineering, and they were not about the rape of the land but about heroic deeds. "The Winning of Barbara Worth," a novel, by Harold Bell Wright, about the saga of irrigating California's Imperial Valley, was made into a movie in 1926, starring Ronald Colman (who played the lead in "Beau Geste" the same year) and Gary Cooper as the young civil engineers. Buoyed by the film, the novel sold a million and a half copies. Given that enthusiasm for public works in the nation's collective consciousness—an enthusiasm that began with the conquering of Panama and the building of the great canal—it is clear that Fort Peck was more than jobs; it was, in a very real sense, yet another act that celebrated and fulfilled the manifest destiny of America.

Wheeler and the other encampments near the construction site sprang up almost overnight in the summer of 1934. Not only had the Army overestimated the number of single men who would want barracks-style living, it had greatly underestimated the number of ancillary workers that would descend on Fort Peck. Fallen women, bartenders, ribbon clerks, barbers, bouncers, midwives, preachers, and card dealers, along with several thousand construction workers, overwhelmed the neat plans of the Corps of Engineers.

Fort Peck City had its clear class distinctions—the twelve permanent houses for the regular Army officers, the two hundred and eighty temporary houses for men like my father, who would direct the work of laboring men. Laborers and craftsmen would live in a hundred and thirty-four barracks buildings with a capacity of three thousand two hundred and sixteen bunk beds, for six thousand four hundred and thirty-two men sleeping in something very like Regular Army open squad rooms. Single foremen, the noncommissioned officers of construction work, were allocated private rooms in collegiate "dormitory blocks" with indoor plumbing. For the barracks, there were detached washhouses with toilets and showers, which, considering the weather in Montana, may have encouraged what became a semiannual event—fumigating the barracks for bedbugs. The barracks were kept at a reasonable distance from the single-family homes, the women's dormitories, and the Fort Peck Hotel, which provided transient housing and private rooms for better-paid inspectors, including my Uncle Donald, who complained regularly about the food and the noise before he married "poor Olive" and set up single-family housekeeping. Poor Olive is what she was always called in our family after he divorced her and left Montana for good.

Because the plan for militarily efficient housing ran smack into the rules of the Montana Welfare Commission, which controlled the hiring of unskilled and semi-skilled labor at the dam, the six thousand-odd single

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• •

workers never appeared, and there were two results: about a third of the barracks and mess buildings were converted to family apartments in 1935, and the boomtowns sprang up.

It was the boomers that put Fort Peck on the cover of the first issue of *Life*. Although the Army had planned decent housing, the miscalculation about the workers' family status made the boomtowns inevitable, and there were rumblings back East about the failure of the Army's scheme. The moment when employment was at its height and crowding in the garish towns was at its greatest happened to coincide with the founding of *Life*. In September, 1936, as the final story conferences for the first issue were being held in *Life's* still unfinished offices, Ernie Pyle, the roving correspondent for the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain, followed up on rumors that Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal dam in Montana was not exactly a model of social planning. The front page of the old *World-Telegram* carried his feature column on Montana's boom, and it was read by Daniel Longwell, *Life's* picture editor. Pyle wrote:

> You have to see the town of Wheeler to believe it.
>
> When you drive thru, you think somebody must have set up hand-painted store fronts on both sides of the road, a background for a western movie thriller, but it's real. . . . Wheeler is a slopover from the government-built city at Ft. Peck dam, it is not on Government property, hence is free to go its own way. . . . It has a half a dozen all-night taverns, and innumerable beer parlors.
>
> At night the streets are a melee of drunken men and painted women, as they are called in books. . . .
>
> Back behind Wheeler is a separate village where the women of easy virtue live. The town has an unprintable name. It has no other name. Everybody calls it by this name. [Unprintability is in the eye of 1936. This was the Riding Academy.] They say a thousand women have heard the call and drifted in for the easy reapings among the dam workers.

Longwell sent Margaret Bourke-White to Fort Peck. She photographed strong-jawed, pipe-smoking top-dog Major T. C. Kittrell, the project manager. Unable to capture the sprawling earth-filled dam from the ground, she hired an airplane and took a classically dull photograph of it, enlivened only slightly by the low light of a Montana sunset. And she met my father, just before she took her most famous photograph. She exposed a single negative of a stark concrete structure which was not the dam but the concrete piers for the highway bridge and release gates at the spillway. She had arrived at Fort Peck in a gray Paris suit and high heels, unprepared for Missouri River mud. She borrowed my father's L. L. Bean rubber-bottomed boots, as he liked to remember, because he had small feet. (I grew into and out of these memorable boots in a single year.) She took the standard industrial photograph of the spillway, including a couple of workmen standing just off-center under the looming towers. The men were brought to the site before the day's second shift began, as props to establish the scale. This was the photograph, cropped and mislabelled in New York as "Fort Peck Dam," that appeared on the first cover of *Life*.

According to my mother, Margaret Bourke-White was not wearing stockings when she borrowed the boots, which is certainly hearsay, and even more certainly not intended as a compliment. My father may have told her about that. Women, except for the extraterrestrial Miss Bourke-White, would no more go to the construction site than to the Riding Academy. Margaret Bourke-White found some of the painted women on Wheeler's streets to be extremely camera shy, which is understandable, since their parents probably thought they were typists or filing clerks at the government office. She did find some subjects, though, including three employees of Ruby Smith who smiled at the camera, the tops of their heads cut off by Bourke-White's unfamiliarity with candid photography. They are smiling because they have just made a little joke. She asked for their names, and they said, "We're just three destitute prostitutes."

Photographing inside Ruby Smith's cathouse was another proposition. Bourke-White had been lent Major Kittrell's car and driver by the Corps, and when she asked to be taken to the biggest whorehouse in town the driver, Gene Tourtlotte, agreed, but suggested she should wait in the car while he went inside to ask if she could come in and take photographs. While she was waiting for the driver, a drunk, noticing this well-dressed, quite attractive woman outside Ruby's place, approached the car, tapped on the window, and said, "You got a man, honey?"

"He's inside," Bourke-White said calmly.

"Lord," the drunk muttered, "you are the most even-tempered woman I ever even heard of."

Gene Tourtlotte, the driver, was an ingenious fellow, and talked Ruby Smith into letting a photographer, and a woman at that, into her place. The photographs illustrated the first example of the magazine's staple feature "*Life* Goes to a Party." Two years later, at the time of what came to be called the Big Slide, Tourtlotte saved Major Kittrell's life, by driving most expeditiously away from the collapsing dam.

IN searching for documents about my father's life, I thought that the Army Corps of Engineers records would be a logical place to begin, but it quickly became clear that what passes for an archival system in the federal government is a capricious mix of collecting and disposing. The problem with the National Archives is simple: they are overcollected and understaffed, and burdened by a daily invasion of genealogy researchers. However, in conversations with the Corps office in Omaha, I discovered that there was something of an archive situated in the basement of the headquarters building at Fort Peck itself. The archive is divided into two parts. There is the genuinely useful, consisting entirely of rolls of plans—drawings showing everything from buried water lines to the dimensions of buildings, waterworks associated with the dam, the spillway structures, the diversion tunnels, the power station, and very accurate surveys of the dam itself. The one thing one does not want in any great engineering project is movement, and the dimensional data kept in the plan room, plus the fixed survey markers, allow one to keep a close and accurate eye on the sleeping dam. Across the hallway from the frequently used plan room is the paperwork archive, consisting of a hundred and sixty-eight numbered but mostly unlabelled boxes of correspondence, reports, and miscellany. In addition, there are two dozen boxes of eight-by-ten black-and-white photographs documenting the construction of the dam and the spillway. The photographs are in chronological order, from early construction, in the spring of 1934, until the completion of the dam, in 1939.

Ronald Wallem, the project manager for the Corps at Fort Peck, unlocked the door to the paperwork-and-photograph archive and said he hoped I'd find what I was looking for, in a tone indicating that he doubted I would. I recall looking at the shelves of dust-covered boxes and thinking that there had to be a father in there somewhere.

The boxes were simple two-cubic-foot packing boxes. When you have no idea where to look, you must start with Box No. 1, carry it over to a table, wipe the dust off it, open it up, and start reading. The contents of the first box, the first dozen boxes, the first sixty boxes, were most discouraging.

All military organizations, and the semicivilian Corps of Engineers is no exception, write "official histories" of their projects, their operations, their battles. At the end of the first day, all I could say with certainty about the history of the Fort Peck Dam was that the Army had very high standards for typists. For the boxes were jammed with monthly, yearly, and completion histories. There were duplicates, even triplicate copies, and these carbons, even on onionskin with the inevitable blurring that results from carbon copying, were of remarkable quality. Every history, every monthly report, was flawlessly typed, with very few erasures, and those quite difficult to detect. Here was an Army that marched on its typing.

I was really just looking for a name. It made no sense to pore over the details of construction of the outlet tunnels or the setting of sheet piling unless I knew they were somehow related to whatever it was, exactly, that my father had done. In the first fifteen or so boxes, there weren't any names at all, except the occasional signature block of Major Kittrell or Captain Someone. There weren't even any lieutenants in the official record, and the Army always has lieutenants—it is in the nature of things. Bored, or eye-strained, I would open one of the boxes of photographs, where each print was in a numbered envelope. And in with the print was the original eight-by-ten-inch negative. The properties of a large-view camera are useful for documenting vast landscapes. There is an exceptionally fine quality of focus, achieved by using the ground-glass plate at the rear of the camera, so that the photographer is looking not at a reflection of the image, as in a modern reflex camera, but at exactly the product of light and lens that will fall on the negative. I suppose I was looking for a face, but the official photographs were as discouraging as the collected paperwork. There were no people in them, either. There were small and distant human figures occasionally, but the photographer did not have people in mind. Pictures of the dam showed as

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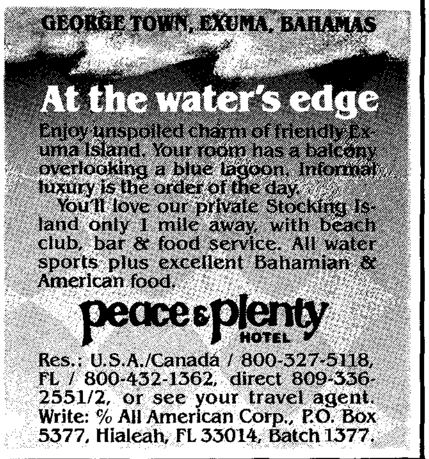

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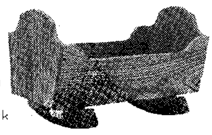

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much as a third of its three-and-a-half-mile length, with very small machines, and even tinier men, scrabbling away at the soil like ants in a vegetable garden, completely dwarfed within the large view. When there were closeup photographs of some ingenious device, or a dredge boat, or a concrete structure still in its wooden forms, there were no people at all.

The 1936 annual report of the town-management division noted that the town could profit from more effort at landscaping, and described a successful scheme of awarding small cash prizes for the best vegetable gardens, the best lawns, the best flower gardens. Neither the winners nor the amounts of the prizes were mentioned. Turning to another box of photographs, bored again with the endless reams of official paperwork, I came across the first name I recognized. I saw a façade-on photograph of one of the temporary houses, with a neatly trimmed lawn, flower beds by the house, and more flowers lining a gravel walkway to the front door. The caption indicated that the winner of the 1936 beautification prize was Mr. C. D. Hurst. He is not in the picture; the only living thing is a white cat lounging in the corner of the yard. This man, I knew, would be Chick Hurst, who, like my father, ended up with his family in San Diego after the war. Chick and Gladys Hurst were from Anaconda, Montana, the copper-smelting town. In the nineteen-thirties, there was very little growing in Anaconda, since the fumes from the smelter killed most green plants. I would not have guessed that the Hursts would win a lawn-and-garden prize, although when I knew them they did keep a neat and floriferous front yard. But then, in San Diego everyone had a garden, once.

By the end of the day, the explanation for the absence of names in the official summaries, reports, and histories was made painfully clear. In a box of random administrative correspondence was a mimeographed memorandum of October 26, 1938, titled "History of Fort Peck Project" and sent to all division and section heads, and on the second page of the memorandum there were directions for the preparation of this history. The general organization would be:

> A. Contractors.
> B. Government inspection force.
> C. Hired Labor Force.

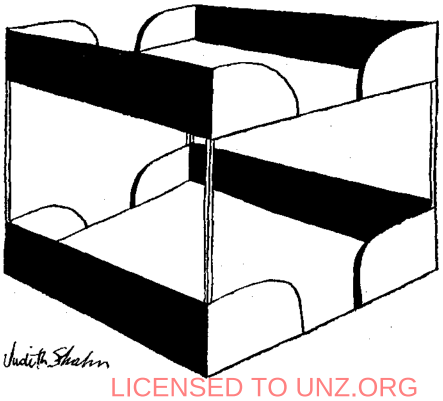
In all cases, the memorandum ordered:

> Refer to charts, omit personalities.

That is a very military concept, I know now, and a very American one. We had deliberately created, after the experience of the First World War, a military of interchangeable parts, exchangeable ranks and ratings, so that any infantry sergeant or enlisted seaman or officer could be reassigned to a comparable position. And the military history of Fort Peck reflected that. Work would not be done by individuals, with the exception of such senior officials as the district engineer or a section head. I had already seen a chart of organization for the diversion tunnels, and it listed every government inspector, down to the low-paid sub-sub-assistant inspectors, by title, without a single human name attached.

Indeed, up to that point the only document I had discovered (except a few photograph captions) with a list of names in it was a collection of depositions given by the survivors of the Big Slide—each man's description of the collapse as taken by the board of inquiry. A cover sheet included the names of the men killed in the slide. There was also a summary report of all the fatal accidents that had occurred between 1934 and 1939, but without names, simply causes of death.

The next day I went back to the basement and continued, without much enthusiasm, through the boxes of records. There is a gentle kind of amusement in reading official histories. The Town Management Section's history described the temporary houses as "well insulated." The insulation consisted of one-inch-thick cellulose beaverboard. It does look, and feel, like wood that has been masticated by that same rodent. Close reading of the official history turned up the information that, because of shortages, many of the houses were protected only by half-inch beaverboard. My mother remembers coming into the children's bedroom and seeing frost, formed by condensation from our breath, growing an inch or two out of the wall, on horizontal icicles attached to the nailheads. I suppose we had the half-inch board.



While sifting through the boxes of photographs for the year 1936, I noticed that an entirely different kind of photograph had begun to appear. As a specific piece of the dam and the associated structures neared completion, the official photographer gathered the government inspection crews together and took a group portrait. Here were the diversion-tunnel gate inspectors, the sheet-piling inspectors. Here was also a photograph of the town's hospital doctors (but not the nurses) standing solemnly in front of the clinic building; of the teachers, at the school; of the firemen; and of the entire police force, twelve men, posed with a 1935 Ford sedan, each of them carrying his nightstick.

Less than half an hour later, I saw my father's face, younger than I am now, looking at the camera with a small, half-embarrassed smile, just like the one in nearly every other photograph ever taken of him. He was unused to smiling on command. He wore a snap-brim Stetson and a jacket with a white sheepskin lining. The photograph was titled "Spillway Inspectors," and there were dozens of them, lined up in two rows, with a military officer standing at the left, slightly apart from the rest. Behind the men loomed the completed concrete gate structure.

So then I knew my father was a spillway inspector, and because he stood fifth from the left, not far from the military officer in charge of the spillway, perhaps he was somewhere near the top. That was entirely speculative, but it is in the nature of people to arrange themselves in a hierarchy. In any case, they were not lined up in the classic military manner, by height. Quite a way down the line, wearing a jacket like my father's and a white cap, was Uncle Donald, identified on the typed caption as "D. Montgomery." This would have been just before he married poor Olive, and he is startlingly good-looking.

The pace of research picked up considerably once it became clear that only

Spillway Section material was going to have even a chance at relevance. Toward the very end of the very last shelf, on the serially numbered hundred-and-forty-second box, there was a handwritten, smudged-pencil label: "Spillway Stuff."

This turned out to be an unusually disorganized collection of almost random paperwork. There were drafts of letters, rather than the neat, chronological carbon copies of correspondence. Someone in the Spillway Section had been less compulsive about throwing things away than the other filing clerks. Folded twice, so that it would fit in a file folder, was a classic military table of organization for the Spillway Section, in gray lines on yellowing plan paper—not a blueprint, which is a reversal of a drawing, but an Ozalid print, which makes a positive duplicate. The lonely box at the top contained the name of John R. Hardin, Captain, Corps of Engineers, Chief, Spillway Section. But, unlike all the other tables of organization, this one listed every position by name as well as title, and by salary. As of October 11, 1936, Maurice R. Montgomery, Assistant Engineer, was second in charge of the spillway channel. He was making twenty-nine hundred dollars annually, which also put him at the second-highest level of the civilian engineers. Money, more than titles, tends to hold up over time as a status mark. The average wage for the inspectors was about eighteen hundred dollars, or thirty-four dollars a week—less, even, than the tradesmen on the project, who made a dollar an hour. That substantial salary explains, I suppose, how we got to live on West Kansas, in the better part of town, or else the better part of town went with the better part of the salary scale. The official histories do not explain how housing was allocated among the inspectors and supervisors and section chiefs.

Somehow, this table of organization, clearly labelled "Historical Data, Organization and Personnel," had survived the general ban on "personalities." And, although it was unique, as a table it was quite typical of the spillway office's way of doing business. Boxes 142 and 143, the two remnants of the Spillway Section, are the only ones out of the entire archive that have even a remote flavor of personality, simply because some intra-office correspondence was saved, while everywhere else it was summarized and discarded.

You should not imagine that there is anything exciting in the office correspondence of civil engineers, but when memory fades there is at least the reality of paper. Reading through the surviving papers from 1936 and 1937, I learned that my father had been involved in supervising more than the physical construction. He was relied upon for what we can call, in a convenient shorthand phrase, "process controls"; that is, he was responsible for insuring the quality of raw materials in the concrete structures, the mile-long spillway channel, and the associated permanent roadways. In civil works, just as in most manufacturing projects, there are theoretical standards; the difference in construction is that you are making a single product, and it is supposed to last for decades. But almost all construction materials for such massive jobs are found on the project site or nearby ("nearby" in civil engineering means within fifty or a hundred miles). So one is required to balance the optimal, theoretical sand and gravel with the reality of Montana dirt or, in the case of asphalt pavement, Montana crude oil.

There are several two- and three-page typed, single-spaced memoranda to the spillway Army engineer, Captain Hardin, written by my father. They are, on inspection, short courses in civil engineering. They attempt to reconcile the theoretical with the practical. Most of them are intended to justify changes from the original specifications while assuring there is no reduction in the quality of the final result. They describe the precision of the testing apparatus, specify the inspection methods, and frequently point out the wisdom of relying on proven techniques rather than abstract standards for laying pavement or pouring concrete. One set of these new inspection standards, my father wrote, is "based on the work of Stanton and Wheems," as it "is used by the Montana Highway Commission." Appeals to authority, such as the textbook authors Stanton and Wheems, are frequently made, but reference is also made to standard practices as opposed to theoretical ones.

Subtle problems, including the cussedness of alkaline rocks, which would rather absorb water than oil, thus contributing to the eventual degradation of the road surfaces, are solved in the memos. Captain Hardin's concern about whether the civilian contractors are supplying as much material as they're charging the government for is studied, and it is concluded that normal settling in the jouncing dump trucks is compacting the material between the contractor's quarry and the job site, and that this is allowable, since the material would have been compacted by rolling in any case. Such is the romance of engineering—writing long reports at night, and spending days watching gravel trucks and road graders at work.

My father was indeed working overtime, producing the memoranda and still supervising the daily construction. In 1936, he applied for a commission in the United States Navy Civil Engineer Corps (Reserve), and the strain of the Fort Peck Dam job is evident in his Navy medical examination. Musculature was "excellent," but he was "underweight, working overtime."

I am sure he was worrying overtime, too. He wanted a commission as early as 1935, for he was already convinced that a Second World War—a war in Europe, he thought—was inevitable. And he worried about other sections of the dam in addition to his own, extremely complex spillway and gate structure. I don't mean to give the impression that he was a busybody. It was simply his nature to observe anything having to do with construction and measure it by his own standards. He was quick to praise good work, but a ride in an automobile with him could become a series of short lectures on how not to build highways.

A recurring theme in the memoranda, which may account for their having survived, is that they tend to deal with compromises, with adapting Washington's or Kansas City's standards for materials to local conditions. Others describe negotiations with civilian contractors, as in the search for missing truckloads of material that turned out to be not missing but simply compacted. Several changes in specifications, or prices to be paid, or manufacturing procedures to be followed, have handwritten notes at the bottom, of which this exchange of May 7, 1936, on the flash point and permeability of bituminous asphalt, is typical:

From Captain Hardin to Chief Engineer Steiner: "Have started change order as indicated. Have Montgomery look over to see if anything has been overlooked."

And Steiner to Hardin: "Montgomery O.K.'s these as they are. I see nothing out of line."

At the time I visited Fort Peck, they were replacing the roadway that had been built with the change-ordered bitumen. There was nothing wrong with the asphalt paving; the problem was another, unexpected, one, and, as usual in eastern Montana, the villain was the underlying rock formation—the curious Bear Paw shale, which, over the past fifty years, had slowly shifted. The shale above the roadway had been covered with additional hundreds of feet of dirt excavated from the spillway, and it moved under the pressure, deforming the roadbed, just as an obviously plastic object, like a child's balloon, will swell in one place when it is compressed in another. So Montgomery was right to see nothing wrong with the specifications for the roadway, and not even he suspected, or could control, the quirky geology of eastern Montana.

The concrete he poured in the spillway structure is in almost perfect condition. I walked on it, fifty-one years after it was poured, and it is in remarkably good shape. Later, I met the owner of, and bartender at, the famous Buckhorn Bar, the only surviving business in Wheeler. He was quite familiar with the quality of my father's work on the spillway. He had come to Montana as a materials inspector for a construction outfit, one of whose jobs was to drill cores into the concrete at the spillway, to see if it was maintaining its strength after forty-odd years of Montana winters. One of the tricks in concrete coring is to avoid hitting the steel reinforcing, which does not cut easily with a core drill. "We got the plans," he said, "and measured it out, and we never hit a piece of steel, which is not usual in this business."

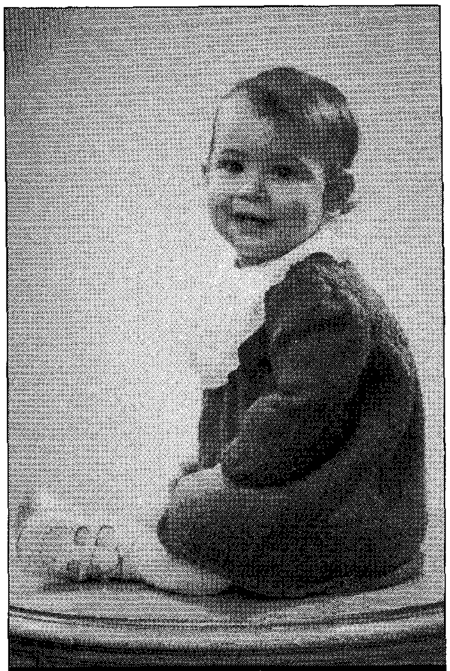
FOR most of my life—forty years now, at least—I had been aware of the Big Slide. That disaster is formally called, in government inquiries, "Failure of the Upstream Face of Fort Peck Dam." It was not that we talked of it regularly in our family or that anyone ever asked questions about it. It was one of those underlying themes—I think every family has one. Each of us has our own set of dates, our watersheds of time. Things happened before them or after them—we moved, someone died, babies were born.

The earliest conversation I can recall about the slide went like this, and I have a very vivid recollection of it. We had moved to San Diego after the war, and I was nine years old, which is approximately the age when small boys become minimally useful. We were planting trees on our windswept hilltop lot, all different kinds of fruit trees, which is the sort of thing a Montanan does quite automatically, except these were tenderer trees than we would have planted at home—lemon, lime, orange, apricot, plum. The climate was too warm for apples, or we would have planted them, too. I was helping my father, which consisted mostly of running back and forth and turning the hose off and on. We—maybe it was I—ran too much water into the shallow, dished hole that would hold the bare-rooted tree. It could not stand in the soft mud, and my father said this: "We'll have to wait. There's too much water, just like the Big Slide." We watched as the dry California dirt began to absorb the water out of the mud, and he continued, "They built the dam too fast, and the water didn't have time to settle out. It felt like jelly when you walked on it."

I asked "Why didn't they wait?" and he said, in a tone I could generate in him myself by doing something foolish or unhelpful, "Because those Army engineers in Kansas City thought they knew everything." After a while, when the mud was stiffer, we finished planting the tree.

It never occurred to me to ask why a dam, particularly an earth-filled dam, would have water in it. "Mud-filled dam" is not what one expects, after all, but that was indeed what it was.

The ordinary method of building an earth dam is this: Two fundamentally different kinds of soil are dug up, transported by truck, and shaped, with rollers and graders, into a dam. The center of the dam, the vertical middle layer, is made of impermeable dirt—very fine sand and clay soils—that water will not pass through easily. This waterproof membrane is called the core. If water did find a pathway



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through the dam, it would flow slowly at first and then faster, as it eroded a larger path, and would undermine the dam. To give the dam strength and resistance to the elements, the upstream and downstream faces and the top are made of coarser sand and gravel. Engineers call the combined exterior faces of the dam the shell. On the upstream face, riprap is laid, to protect the dam from erosion by waves and ice. That is how most big earth-filled dams in the United States have been constructed.

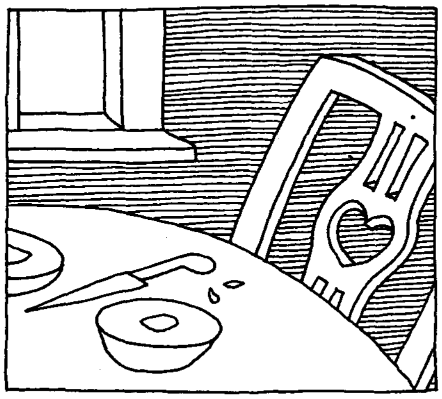
The Fort Peck Dam, however, was built by a dredging process. This choice of method had two precedents. On the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, a number of flood-control and navigation structures, levees (artificial banks), weir works, and diversion structures had been routinely built by dredging. And the largest dam ever built by the Corps of Engineers before Fort Peck, the Gatun Lake Dam, which provides a constant water source to operate the Panama Canal locks, was built largely of dredged fill—twenty-five million cubic yards of it. These are called "hydraulic-filled."

By the nineteen-thirties, the Corps of Engineers was expert at the process of dredging. It was the logical, probably inevitable method of choice for Fort Peck, but a hazardous one. Four dredges in operation at Fort Peck sank their giant cutting drills into sections of the Missouri riverbed above and below the dam site, and pumped a mixture of water, silt, sand, gravel, and small rocks through pipelines to the dam site. The contents of the pipe would be about half water, carrying the soil, and half usable material. The essence of the engineering problem was somehow to separate the fine, waterproofing material for the core of the dam from the coarser but stronger sand and gravel that would make up the outside faces of the structure. This was accomplished by pouring the dredge materials out of pipes at the periphery of the slowly rising dam. The larger and heavier rocks would fall first, settling near the outlets from the dredge pipes, and then the finer sands and smallest gravels were carried a few feet farther away from the edges of the structure and they settled to the bottom. And, finally, the finest materials—tiny sand grains and particles of clay—were carried in suspension to the center of the dam, where they precipitated very slowly, making the core. The top of the dam, at this point and all through the construction phase, was a muddy lake of dredge-carried water. This water was pumped out of the lake, back into the river, downstream from the dam. In engineers' jargon, the lake was the "core pool," sitting over the fine sands and clays that would congeal into the impervious center of the finished dam.

Understanding how Fort Peck was built, you can imagine how the dam might have shaken like jelly when you walked on it and when machinery rolled along the beaches of the core pool. The stability of the structure depended on several things: the quality of the dredged material, the accuracy with which it separated and sorted itself into core and shell, and the rate of construction. If it were built too fast and the core and the shell never properly dewatered, you would end up with the world's largest mud-filled dam.

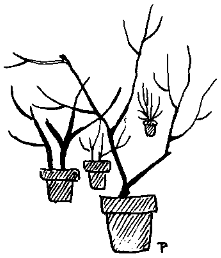
HUNDREDS of engineers and inspectors supervised the dredge-fill of the dam. The raw materials at the dredgeheads were studied, with samples taken by drilling and coring, even before the boats were brought to the dredging area. The differential settling rates in the core pool were analyzed daily, to make sure the sands and gravels were settling into a proper shell and the clays were precipitating into the central core. The whole structure, all three and a half miles of it, was surveyed weekly from fixed points at the two ends to insure that it was sitting there upright and stable. What could not be known by objective means was what was happening down in the core and underneath the entire structure.

There is another universal problem with building dams, as opposed to simply constructing a building. What do you do with the river? The first choice is to build an artificial channel to one side of the dam, and close it after the structure is completed, returning the river to its original course. The other is to divert the water through tunnels under the structure. It was done by tunnelling at Fort Peck, and the four outlets were bored and completed in 1937, so that the entire summer flow—the non-flood flow—could be handled through the tunnels. With the river diverted, the Corps was able to proceed at maximum speed to finish the dam during 1937 and 1938. The tunnels are still there, still in use, and except for one month in 1975, when an inch of water poured over the top of the spillway gates, the entire flow of the upper Missouri has been held temporarily in the Fort Peck reservoir, and returned to the river through the diversion tunnels. The spillway, my father's contribution, remains a hypothetical necessity.



Shortly after the tunnels began carrying the river underneath the dam structure, the channel for the old river was closed, and construction of the dam, building it up to two hundred and fifty feet above the original riverbed, went forward at a rapid pace. It is in the nature of some engineers, and supervisors of vast work-relief projects in particular, to take pride in the numbers of men employed and the speed and efficiency of the construction. So it was here, and by the summer of 1938 the dam was approaching its intended maximum height, with dredges running twenty-four hours a day. And the lake, with the diversion tunnels partly closed, began to fill, lapping against the upstream face of the dam.

The final goal of two hundred and fifty feet was within reach by the fall of 1938. The original plan called for dredge fill to the two-hundred-foot level, followed by fifty feet of dry, packed earth. But the dredges had proved so efficient that the plans changed, and dredge-filling proceeded to two hundred and twenty-five feet, saving only the last twenty-five feet for a dry fill, to be topped by Route 24. As the dam rose, it narrowed toward the top. The slope of the rear of the dam, the downstream side, is shallow: from the center of the dam to the downstream end of the banked dirt is over a third of a mile. The upstream face was forced into a steeper pitch, less than a quarter of a mile from the white line of Route 24 to the upstream "toe." The ratio of height to width is significant. The upstream face, as designed, had a slope of four-in-one; that is, for every foot of elevation there were four feet of width. The rear of the dam was more conventional: for every foot of rise, eight feet of width. The Army's only other great earth dam, the Gatun Lake Dam, had shallow slopes both upstream and down. Gatun is approximately a hundred feet high (about a third as high as Fort Peck), and both sloping faces were built on the shallow angle of one foot in nine. When the Fort Peck Dam did partly collapse, it was the steep upstream end that slid, while the downstream slope stood firm.



So, then, the stage was set. The dam was nearly completed. The summer flow of the Missouri River throbbed away underground, diverted into tunnels, tamed and controlled. And the rapid construction, the great dredge-and-fill exercise, continued. The men were working two shifts a day, from dawn to just after dark.

This was my father's version of what happened. It is almost completely inaccurate—you should understand that at the outset. He told me once or twice about the day of the Big Slide, and his essential account was this: Workmen had warned the Army engineers that the dam was unstable; he himself had questioned the speed of construction (and for this reason I always thought he had worked on the main dam rather than the spillway); temporary rail lines that ran across the upstream face of the dam, where railroad cars were dumping the riprap for the outside skin of the dam, wobbled under the heavily loaded trains, indicating that the structure itself was unstable. And then, the day of the slide, he told me, two carloads of Army engineers drove out onto the dam to see what these complaints were about, and, as they did, it began to collapse. One carload was swept away in the slide and the men drowned in the lake above the dam; the other was saved because the driver, instead of taking time to turn his car around, just threw it in reverse gear and backed away from the dam's crumbling face.

This was not an eyewitness account, as I always assumed it was. It was not until recently, when I had my father's Navy personnel file in hand, that I could actually date our family's exodus from Montana to California. The Big Slide occurred on September 22, 1938. By then, we were living in California, where he had moved us after the completion of the spillway project. He was working on another Army flood-control project, the Hansen Dam, in the San Gabriel mountains, northwest of Los Angeles. This one, by the way, was also an earth dam. He would, however, have known something about the complaints arising from the instability of the railroad tracks, because his last job, after the spillway and before packing us out of Montana in the summer of 1938, was managing the Snake Butte quarry, where the granite riprap was blasted loose and loaded on the trains. Problems with the tracks at Fort Peck would have affected his scheduling of deliveries, and he would have had daily opportunities to talk to the train crews.

However, no carload of Army engineers drowned. In an odd way, for he was not a vindictive man, that was pure wishful thinking on his part. But there was a car that escaped by backing up. The driver was Gene Tourtlotte, and the occupants were some local Army engineers, including Major Kittrell, the over-all head of the operation. They did back up, for half a mile, as the dam crumbled in front of them and almost underneath them; that is true.

Here is what happened. All the information is in the operational archives at Fort Peck. It is all quite beautifully typed. On the morning of September 22nd, as the first dredging shift came to work, the men noticed that the surface of the core pool was almost overlapping the upstream crest of the dam. It was never supposed to come within six feet of topping the crest. Since no dredge fill or dredge water had entered the core pool after eight-thirty the previous evening, this was inexplicable. They surveyed against known bench marks, and found that the core pool had not risen; it was exactly where it had been the previous day. Therefore, the upstream face of the dam must have slipped downward. For the rest of the morning, they worked to check all the elevations, and they discovered that the dredge pipe that ran across the upstream face was almost two feet

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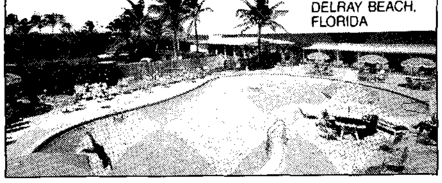

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lower than it had been when the last shift left on the evening of the twenty-first. The pipes on the downstream face of the dam were exactly where they should have been. The dam was settling only on the upstream side; it was "shearing," in engineers' talk. This was when a call went out to Major Kittrell, and he started out, motoring from the east end of the dam, nearest Fort Peck City and his headquarters building, a long three-mile ride across the top of the dam toward the west abutment, where the core pool threatened to overtop the upstream crest of the dam.

They continued to survey, with the dredges shut down. The distance from the surface of the core pool to the solid core at the bottom of the pool was normal. If the dam was slumping, it was only the upstream shell that was moving. The sand and gravel and riprap facing was sinking, and sliding outward, creeping upstream.

This is part of a deposition by Ray Kendall, who was making one of the survey checks, to the investigating officer:

> I noticed a small crack in the ground underneath my feet. . . . In a few seconds it got considerably deeper and longer.
>
> I noticed Douglas Moore, near #50 pickup, and Nelson Van Stone down on the road approximately 200 feet from me. Moore and Van Stone, realizing the danger, were waving and yelling. . . . That was the last I saw of Moore, however, Van Stone (to the best of my memory) ran back to the road and was close to Moore's car. . . . That was the last I remember seeing Van Stone.
>
> I looked at my watch to make a check on the time of the slide. It was 1:21 P.M. Then I glanced at the two draglines, which were . . . 400′ away. They began to tilt over and go down very fast; then I realized the great danger. Just a few seconds later the dragline seemed to have sunken 100 feet.

Ray Kendall found himself being swept away, not by water but by an avalanche of mud and dirt. The very ground he was standing on, the entire face of the dam as far as he could see, was moving out into the lake in one solid piece. He was running across the quarry rock, the final finished upstream face of the dam, turning his ankle, falling, and as he ran across it the riprapped face of the dam moved a quarter of a mile straight out into the lake in less than three minutes. When the slide stopped, he was standing on a newly formed island, a solid, stable chunk of the dam which was eleven hundred feet away from where it had been when the slide started: "Realizing I was on safe ground I looked at my watch and it was 1:25 P.M. With a big lump in my throat, I almost knew that my fellow-workmen was not as fortunate as me."

Kendall crossed a river of water draining out of the core pool to a section of the face which still stood intact:

> I climbed to a high point of the hill to get a better observation of the tragic scene. . . . I picked up a transit [a surveyor's instrument with a very high-powered telescopic lens] and went back to the scene hoping that I might spot Johnson or someone else that might be in distress. I searched the terrible scene for bodies but all was in vain. Rescue parties carried on the search.
>
> Thus ending the most tragic scene in all my life.

Douglas Moore and Nelson P. Van Stone, Sr., whom Kendall saw just before he began his terrified run across the moving face of the dam, were killed. So were John Johnson and five other men.

I give Van Stone's full name, because it implies, it requires, that there is, or once was, a Nelson P. Van Stone, Jr., out there somewhere. He would be about my age, or a few years older. Van Stone, Sr., was thirty-one when he was carried out into Fort Peck Lake, where his body still lies under hundreds of feet of mud and sand and water. The area where he died was covered with additional fill after the slide, to reinforce that section of the dam—almost five million extra cubic yards of fill, put in at the shallow angle of one foot of rise for every twenty-five feet of length.

Ralph E. Anglen's deposition confirmed Ray Kendall's fears. Anglen was an oiler—that is, a maintenance mechanic—on one of the two draglines that Kendall saw fall into the lake. It was the dragline near which Kendall saw Van Stone and Moore. This is what Anglen saw:

> At about 1:15 P.M. on September 22, 1938, I was working on dragline No. D-11 when Mr. Nelson P. Van Stone came running up the slope of the upstream face of the dam yelling. I looked around and it looked like the corepool was going to run over the edge of the dam. I then looked down the slope and saw the slope cracking near the railroad track. I started to run west and down the slope with Mr. Van Stone in front of me. The slope seemed to rise in front of us while the part we were on dropped fast. Mr. Van Stone had turned east [away from the center of the slide]. As I dropped he went out of sight and I heard him say "Goodbye boys."

Anglen found himself in the lake, covered with mud, alive. "I came up near an island," he added, "and I saw a pair of boots washed by me."

Oiler Anglen had that peculiar retentive mind for detail that many construction men do have, but I was not exactly prepared for his account of Van Stone's last words. They are quite believable: you or I might scream or pray or curse, but men of Van Stone's generation had a model to follow. It is, in ways, the standard American heroic model, and you can pick your own hero: more than one horse thief has stood on a gallows or sat on a horse with a noose around his neck and said something close to what Nelson Van Stone said. A steelworker at Hoover Dam had died in 1935 with as much bravado. Kenneth Wilson fell three hundred and fifty feet when a cable broke, and as he fell he passed the men on his own work crew. "Wilson had plenty of nerve though," one told a newspaperman, "I could see Kenny wave goodbye to us all."

But it is more generally the soldier's exit line, and examples are almost endless. Let me give you one of the most obscure, because it proves the point so clearly by its very obscurity. This account is from one of the hundreds of personal memoirs written by Civil War veterans. This one, by Newton Martin Curtis, is "From Bull Run to Chancellorsville," published in 1906. At the Battle of Glendale, also known as the Battle of Charles City Road, near the James River, in Virginia, the 16th New York Brigade was guarding the Charles City roadway when they were attacked. On the evening of June 30, 1862, the rebels shot Eland A. Woodruff, private, who "survived his wound half an hour; as he was carried to the rear, he said, 'Good Bye, boys, I can't be with you any longer.' "

Nelson Van Stone knew how to behave. I have thought about that often. When my father was dying, much more slowly, of cancer, he behaved very much the same way.

THE eight deaths in the Big Slide are accounted for in the official records of the Army Corps of Engineers, as are all fifty-nine deaths that occurred at Fort Peck. The official judgment of the cause of death is "unavoidable." Whether the Big Slide itself was unavoidable, as the Army concluded, or caused, as my father believed, by simply filling the dam too fast, making it waterlogged and unstable, is a question that was never truly resolved by all the investigations of the causes of the slide.

The official inquiries, which took two years to complete, blamed the slide on the underlying earth foundation of the dam—the Bear Paw shale, which, as we have noted, was a difficult material. Bear Paw shale formations usually contain strata of bentonite, so the board of inquiry assumed that there were such strata in the foundation of the dam, far below the filled material. Bentonite is "an impalpable clay," and extremely plastic. So the official Army explanation for the failure of the upstream face of the dam was this: Undetected seams of bentonite, situated below the foundation of the dam, were saturated by water from the forming lake, and the seeping water from the dredge-filled dam itself, and became saturated, swollen, and lubricious. They provided a slippery surface upon which the bottom of the dam slid out into the lake. The weight of the dam itself squeezed the saturated bentonite until it broke out of its natural place, like toothpaste when the tube fails, and it worked its way through faults in the Bear Paw shale, making a thin but extensive slippery surface underneath the dam, and on this greasy material the whole foundation of the dam slid.

The Army specifically denied that the construction method itself, with the inevitable saturation of the dam caused by rapid dredge-filling, could have been an error. None of the investigators questioned the original shape of the dam, with its steep upstream slope, though the redesign, after the slide, created a bigger "footprint," which would lie more solidly on the foundation soils below the dam.

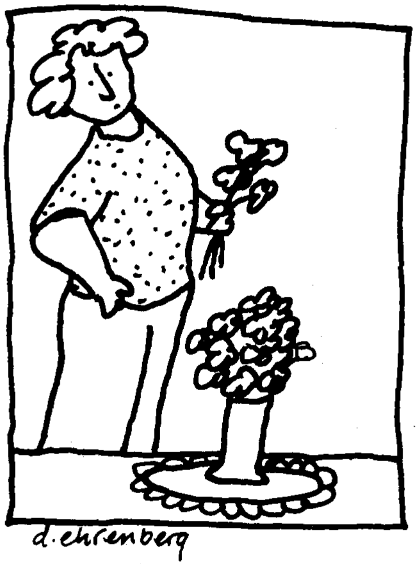
The official inquiry does consider the question of too rapid construction, but rather indirectly. At the instigation of one of the investigators, the late Arthur Casagrande, who was a professor of civil engineering at Harvard University, the Army did allow that the material in the upstream face of the dam might have been partly liquefied by the pressure of the core pool's water and thus might have had little or no stability. To put it simply, the pressure of the water would have been great enough to float the individual grains of sand in the dam, keeping them from locking together as they would normally, destroying their capacity for friction, one against another. Like most things that go wrong, the slide probably had more than one cause. There seems to have surely been a failure in the foundation, apparently caused by the hidden bentonite, but the speed and the distance of the slide, the sudden and catastrophic nature of the failure of the upstream face, may have been accelerated by saturation. Saturated sands do not necessarily become liquefied; that usually is caused by some sudden motion, like an earthquake—or, in this case, an abrupt shearing or failure of the foundation soils. The dam would have failed in any case, because of the problems with the foundation, but the failure might not have been so massive and so swift had the sand not been so saturated that it could become liquefied. It was that liquefaction, or the propensity for it, that my father meant when he said the whole dam would quiver like jelly.

When the Corps rebuilt the dam, it changed the design completely, building it at a much flatter slope on the upstream side—generally at slopes of seven and eight to one, with some areas as flat as fifty feet of width for every foot of rise. Then it would more closely resemble its engineering precedent, the Gatun Lake Dam, with its symmetrical nine-to-one slopes. We can say with assurance that an error of judgment is implied when the reconstruction was a complete redesign.

Very few members of the engineering corps responsible for the construction at Fort Peck are still alive, but I have spoken to one of them, who in 1938 was a shavetail lieutenant in charge of inspecting the core material and the dredging process. We had a cordial conversation until I asked him if there had been any indications of problems with the integrity of the dam before the slide. I asked if anyone had tried to warn him or warn the Corps, and he said no. The last thing he said was this: "I suppose it was a combination of things. But why are you trying to dig up dirt, blame some good engineers?"

WHEN I saw my father alive for the last time, in the late summer of 1981, his mind was fully occupied with the immediate, brief future. We had achieved a kind of truce about questions. I wouldn't ask him many, and if he had anything to say he'd say it. That sounds a little cold, but it was a satisfactory arrangement, as it solved any number of problems created by my asking the wrong questions. I had long since discovered that he did not remember things that seemed important to me, that he really didn't like to talk about Fort Peck or his Navy years during the war, and that he was frustrated by the painful business of trying to explain engineering concepts to an utter layman. I suspect one of the reasons I never even tried to take high-school physics was my clear, although not conscious, understanding that going to him for help with physics homework would have been more painful than help with algebra and plane geometry had already proved to be.

On that last visit, the summer he knew he was going to die, we were sitting in the living room of his house, making small non-talk. He was watching the traffic, headed down the hill in front of the house. He said, without any bitterness, and, as usual, without any introduction, "We should never have moved here. There are too many people here." At the time, I thought he meant this particular house, the second one he had owned in La Mesa, and in a less attractive part of town than the first. The old big house was on a hill, and you could see all the way to the sometimes snowcapped Laguna Mountains on a clear day. After going back to Montana, where there are not too many people, I don't think it had anything to do with the house. I think he meant California.


d. ehrenberg

All his life, after the war, he could never quite believe that another six hundred and ninety people a week would want to move into San Diego County, month after month, year after year. He really could have been a millionaire by the time he died. He always made good money, he had friends in the real-estate business, all he had to do was believe in the infinite growth of San Diego and speculate quietly in house lots or commercial property. But he just could not believe that so many people would want to live so close to each other, and pay him a king's ransom for any property he had accumulated before they arrived. He had considerable imagination about many things, but not about the irresistible desire of people to spend money on real estate that is unacquainted with snow.

He had developed a weak heart, and Parkinson's disease, for which the medication was itself somewhat debilitating and psychologically depressing. It gave him, he told me, "screwy ideas"—a phrase used generally around our house to describe people who were not the sort one could trust. And, finally, fifty and more years of smoking caught up with him, and he was diagnosed as having small-cell carcinoma of the lung. He refused surgery and chemotherapy. He was seventy-six years old, already frail, and ready to die. It took three months, the last thirty days a very hard time indeed.

He was calm in many ways, but also fretful about small details. I think we went over the list of personal assets—the retirement entitlements and stocks and bonds that would support my mother—at least four times in the two days I spent with him. He was still taking his medication for the parkinsonism, and was worried that he might do something "screwy," and finally found, tucked away in a desk drawer, half a dozen cartridges for a .32-calibre Colt semiautomatic that he had given to Mother back in 1934, so that she could protect herself around that rough crowd that had descended on Fort

Peck. It was my job to take the shells to the local police station and turn them in. He went through his wallet that evening, and it was completely empty except for one credit card, which he broke in half, bending the plastic back and forth until the heat of friction from the flexing made the polymers less elastic and it failed, structurally speaking. Sometime before, he must have taken out the hundred-dollar bill that he always carried, having always carried cash for an emergency, not ever quite relying on the magic of plastic to provide car repairs or dry clothes or a night in a hotel. There is not an object much more impotent and forlorn than an empty wallet.

His death certificate is dated September 22, 1981—forty-three years to the day after the slide. It had been, by all our memories, at least thirty years since he had mentioned it to anyone in the family. Men had, and do have, many things in their lives that they cannot explain to wives, mothers, children, and, when all is unsaid and undone, to themselves. It is someone else's job. But in the last few days of his life, apparently because of a metastasis of the cancer to his brain, he became somewhat unsure of exactly where he was. He was in the hospital, of course. He would try to get out of bed, struggling against the gentle restraints. He had—absolutely had—to get to a telephone and warn them, he kept saying. The dam was unsafe, he had to call them, or something terrible was going to happen. They were building it too fast. It was all wrong.

Although, as I know now, he had never had any personal control over the construction of the dam itself, still it was the last thing he would remember. It was his final and unfulfilled professional responsibility.

—M. R. MONTGOMERY

• •

WHITE HAWTHORN IN THE WEST OF IRELAND

I drove West
in the season between seasons.
I left behind suburban gardens.
Lawnmowers. Small talk.

Under low skies, past splashes of coltsfoot,
I assumed
the hard shyness of Atlantic light
and the superstitious aura of hawthorn.

All I wanted then was to fill my arms with
sharp flowers,
to seem, from a distance, to be part of
that ivory, downhill rush. But I knew,

I had always known,
the custom was
not to touch hawthorn.
Not to bring it indoors for the sake of

the luck
such constraint would forfeit—
a child might die, perhaps, or an unexplained
fever speckle heifers. So I left it

stirring on those hills
with a fluency
only water has. And, like water, able
to redefine land. And free to seem to be—

for anglers,
and for travellers astray in
the unmarked lights of a May dusk—
the only language spoken in those parts.

—EAVAN BOLAND

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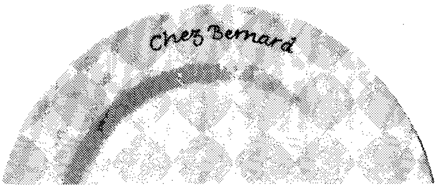

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BOOKS

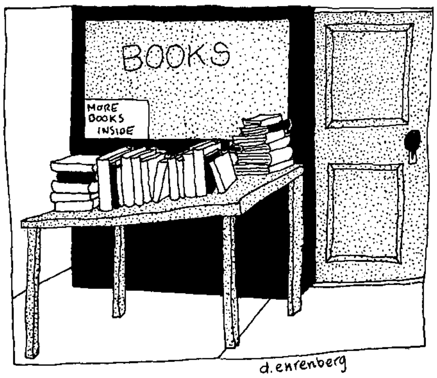
Worlds Apart

E. L. Doctorow's "Billy Bathgate" (Random House; $19.95) is a maddeningly peculiar book: a novel that explains itself compulsively yet doesn't seem to know itself very well. Having taken two shots at writing about the America of the nineteen-thirties, one too baroque and distanced ("Loon Lake") and the other too simple and personal ("World's Fair"), the novelist has this time happened on a story that is an ideal vehicle for his ideas about the period—the career of the Bronx gangster known as Dutch Schultz—but he doesn't trust it. The prose is anxious and elaborately wrought. Straining to give us the last word on the thirties, it analyzes, rhapsodizes, muses, embellishes, keeping a tight grip on all the possible meanings of events—so tight it nearly strangles the life out of the story. The hero and narrator, Billy, is a poor street kid (his assumed last name refers to a major avenue in the Bronx) who hooks up with Schultz's gang as a kind of mascot. Doctorow makes it clear that Billy is writing this account many years later, from the perspective of an older man, but the narrative voice is too strange to be accounted for by temporal distance or the effects of age:

> I will never forget how it felt to hold a loaded gun for the first time and lift it and fire it, the scare of its animate kick up the bone of your arm, you are empowered there is no question about it, it is an investiture, like knighthood, and even though you didn't invent it or design it or tool it the credit is yours because it is in your hand, you don't even have to know how it works, the credit is all yours, with the slightest squeeze of your finger a hole appears in a piece of paper sixty feet away, and how can you not be impressed with yourself, how can you not love this coiled and sprung causation, I was awed, I was thrilled, the thing is guns come alive when you fire them, they move, I hadn't realized that.

Talk about loaded. On every page of "Billy Bathgate" Doctorow sprays us with his heaviest verbal artillery, riddles us with literary effects. It's almost poignant to think how swiftly and cleanly Billy's emotions might have been portrayed in a gangster movie by Hawks or Walsh or Wellman. Doctorow's treatment has a mythic, overexquisite quality that suggests (nearly to the point of parody) a European approach to American experience; it's not hard to imagine Sergio Leone directing this scene, holding that gun in closeup for two or three minutes, until it's swollen with significance. "Billy Bathgate" is Doctorow's "Once Upon a Time in America"—a violent historical fantasy that's both alienated and delirious.

The only real difference between this novel and Doctorow's previous evocations of the period is that "Billy Bathgate" isn't purely interior—isn't all voice. This time, at least, there's some action. The bloodiness of the story actually seems to brace Doctorow; violence is one of his specialties. (When he tries to do without it, his work goes flat—it's just sociology with flourishes.) The novel begins with a scene of voluptuous brutality: the cement-overshoes execution of Bo Weinberg, a Schultz henchman who made the mistake of crossing his boss. Doctorow's description of the incident is remarkable, both for the excruciating precision of the details and for its extraordinary placement, out of sequence, at the start of the book. We're given a lovingly crafted tableau of Schultz's sadism before we have any idea who Billy Bathgate and Bo Weinberg are and what circumstances have brought them to this grim moment. The jolt of the opening chapter certainly gets our attention, the way a huge, lurid banner headline does. Read on, it says, for more up-close evil and inside stories about the flamboyant monsters of gangland myth; Doctorow promises to serve up the rubouts of our dreams. We fight through the puzzlingly ornate prose because the violence is too choice to miss; we practically know how the cement feels as it hardens around Weinberg's feet. (The writing, meanwhile, seems to be forming a solid, heavy block around our heads.)



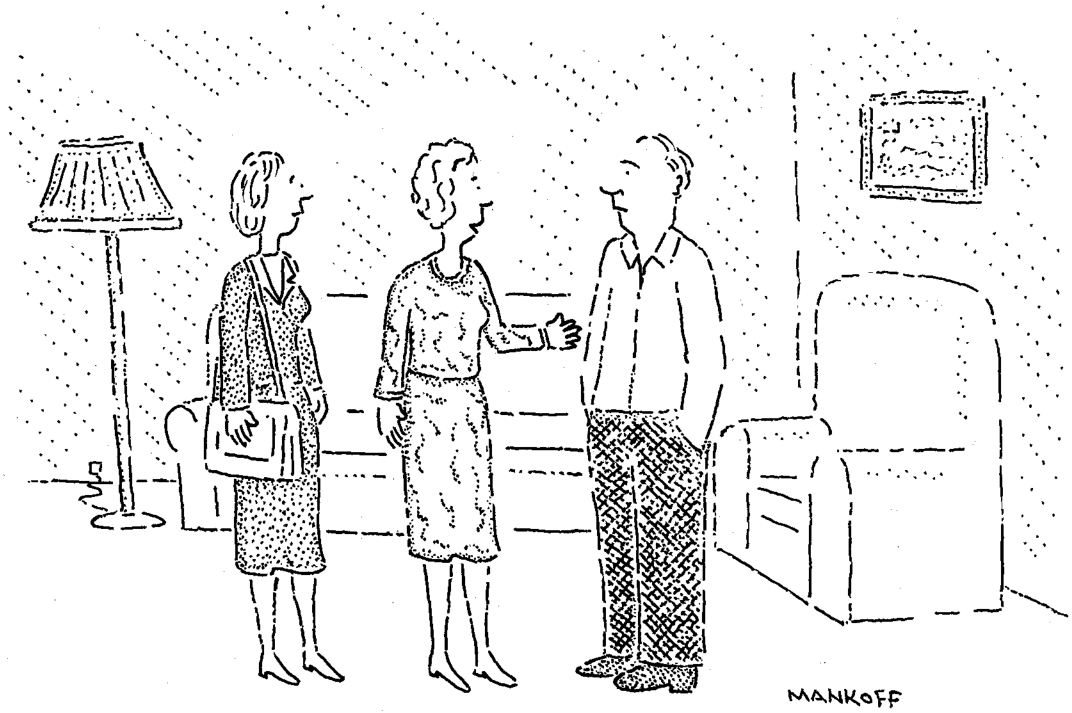
Just as Weinberg, calling for his mama, is about to be dumped into the river, the scene blacks out and the novel seems to begin again—at the beginning, this time. "It was juggling that had got me where I was," Billy writes, and he launches into a lyrical evocation of the street life of his poor neighborhood, a gooey prose poem, which he caps with this grand utterance: "So there you see the heart and soul of what we were, in that moment in the history of the Bronx, and you would never know from these dirty skinny boys of encrusted noses and green teeth that there were such things as school and books and a whole civilization of attendant adults paling into insubstance under the bright light of the Depression." And Doctorow's intentions become a bit clearer; in the lulls between killings—when he's not dazzling us with the pyrotechnics of gore—the writer gives himself away. "Billy Bathgate," we realize, is going to be yet another of Doctorow's variations on the coming-of-age novel, and one, besides, that has a very specific—even a dialectical—function in the body of his work. It's an alternative, corrective version of the sentimental and obviously autobiographical "World's Fair": the novel is generated by the author's imagination of what his own unremarkable childhood protected him from (or excluded him from); this is a good boy's fantasy memoir of growing up bad. He's describing a world that has roughly the same coördinates as his personal history—the Bronx, the thirties—but is nonetheless remote and exotic, and must have seemed so at the time as well. The would-be gangster Billy Bathgate is a good ten years older than little Edgar of "World's Fair," and Billy is as much a small boy's dream of adolescent freedom as a good citizen's dream of lawlessness.

Yet, try as he may to write his way into the darker, wilder realm that Billy

Bathgate inhabits, Doctorow never quite abandons himself to the task; he remains, in literary terms, a very well-behaved boy indeed. We rarely feel, even in the book's most vivid and breathless and fluent passages, any real excitement in the writing. Billy's big experiences—being discovered by Schultz, learning the intricate machinery of the rackets, making love to Schultz's girlfriend, and witnessing a few famous murders—are rendered in elaborate impressionistic set pieces full of long, rolling sentences, but we aren't transported. The verbal intensity of "Billy Bathgate" is too obviously willed to be completely convincing; there's something fatally conscientious about Doctorow's historical vision. Billy, for instance, isn't simply a neighborhood sharpie on the way up, an opportunist in rags; Doctorow dresses him up in a spiffy, perfectly tailored metaphor (the juggling) and endows him, too, with a complex, ambivalent consciousness. He's a very useful kind of narrator: between childhood and adulthood, neither a full member of the gang's inner circle nor a rank outsider, he's always seeing things from two points of view, shuttling between detachment and passionate involvement. His position—neither here nor there, on the margins of large events—forces him to be constantly *interpreting* the fragments of history that flash by him; since he's never quite sure what's happening or where he stands, his wits are his only security. At one point, he announces, "I knew now I could discern Mr. Schultz's inarticulate genius and give it language, which is to say avoid its wrath." Yes, Billy Bathgate is an artist figure, and giving language to the inarticulate genius of the gangster is the aim of the novel. But "Billy Bathgate" goes overboard. The strenuous articulation drowns the "genius" that is its subject; the sheer effort of writing—of interpretation and craft—becomes the book's only true subject.

The calculation we sense in Doctorow's hyperbolic style and his "larger than life" conception of character makes the novel slightly grotesque and more than a little infuriating. Yet the book's flaws are compelling: they force us to think about what it means for Doctorow to have written this story in this way. The discrepancy between the lurid, disturbing material he chooses and the overcontrolled presentation has never been greater, and it's not entirely a sign of bad faith. In "Billy Bathgate" Doctorow's wrongheadedness seems almost heroic: he's trying, as he has done in nearly every book he has written, to understand something that's frighteningly alien to his own character. He's obsessed with what he sees as an insane, arbitrary, vicious streak in the American character, and, clearly, doesn't know how to deal with it. His novels—from his unlikely début, a harsh Western called "Welcome to Hard Times"—are the work of a sane, civilized, intelligent man who feels driven to look for some trace of himself in the most brutal moments of his country's history. And, in novel after novel, he can't quite find it. Every time, we can feel the writer recoiling from full identification with his monstrous subjects and settling for *defining* them, with his formidable and scrupulous literary craft: a perfectly worked-out metaphor, an impeccably mimicked voice, a style that gives the rawest history the lyrical sheen of hallucination (the Sergio Leone effect). In his novel about Dutch Schultz he doesn't, finally, tell us very much about Dutch Schultz. The mobster's paranoia and psychotic volatility are qualities that have been staples of movie portraits of crime bosses for over fifty years.

There's a certain integrity in Doctorow's approach: he doesn't claim to have got inside the twisted soul of Dutch Schultz but only to have observed and articulated, along with Billy. It's frustrating, though, that he doesn't go farther. William S. Burroughs—who is in most respects not Doctorow's equal as a writer—did a better job with the same subject in "The Last Words of Dutch Schultz," written as a film script and organized around the famous police transcript of the mobster's deathbed ravings. Burroughs' stripped-down account seems truer to Schultz's madness. He respects, even relishes, the incoherence and opacity of Schultz's dying monologue, a fragmented discourse with phrases like "French Canadian bean soup" popping up out of nowhere—he probably takes it for some sort of primitive Surrealist text—and makes no attempt



"And this is the loyal opposition."

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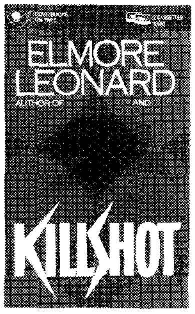

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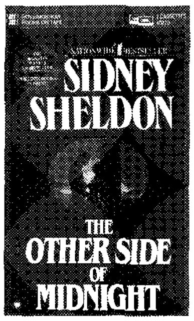

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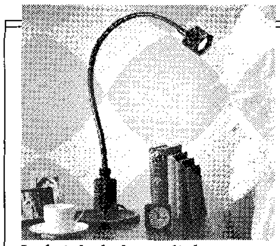

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to interpret, to decorate the facts with his own sensibility. When Doctorow gets to the deathbed scene, he first sets it up with some philosophizing by Billy:

> He was a monologist all his life, he was never as silent as he thought he was or as ill-equipped in speech. I think now, as one who linked my life to his, that whatever he did was of a piece, the murdering and the language for it, he was never at a loss for words, whatever he pretended. And while this monologue of his own murder is a cryptic passion, it is not poetry, the fact is he lived as a gangster and spoke as a gangster, and when he died bleeding from the sutured holes in his chest he died of the gangsterdom of his mind as it flowed from him, he died dispensing himself in utterance, as if death is chattered-out being, or as if all we are made of is words and when we die the soul of speech decants itself into the universe.

Then he doctors the speech a little, to make it flow more smoothly. (We may also notice that some of Schultz's utterances fit awfully snugly into the structure of the narrative: his repeated calls for his mother—not invented by the author—rhyme too nicely with Bo Weinberg's dying cries and with the narrator's fixation on his crazy mother.) And then Billy takes his handwritten transcript home and *studies* it.

"Billy Bathgate" is essentially the work of a brilliant student, one who has nearly convinced himself that "all we are made of is words"—that language is the substance of the world. It may well be the substance of E. L. Doctorow's world, but he still can't make his orderly world accommodate the likes of Dutch Schultz—the slouching American beast he's forever stalking. Doctorow is at his best when he forgets his craft and gives himself over to his terrors, as in "The Book of Daniel" (which is both his richest and his worst-constructed novel), or when he detaches himself entirely and indulges his talent for lofty, arrogant literary play, as in the first half of "Ragtime." He straddles the two modes in "Billy Bathgate," and leaves the novel in the middle of nowhere; it reads like a translation. It's as if he wanted both to engage some ugly truth about the country his grandparents came to and to avoid being implicated in it. He clings—self-defeatingly—to the notion that the only true culture is that of the Old World. The overrefined prose of "Billy Bathgate" is defensive, a gesture of refusal. It tells us that E. L. Doctorow won't assimilate, won't identify with the worst of America even as he's struggling to interpret it—that juggling and sleight of hand and elegant subterfuge will just have to do.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

JOAN MAKES HISTORY, by Kate Grenville (British American Publishing; $17.95). "*I was not born for this kind of small beer,* I whispered to myself as I pressed my forehead against the window and stared out at gardeners fingering their spades, pretending to dig zinnias. *I was born for more than this.*" So laments Joan, a governor's wife in colonial Australia in 1855, and it is an opinion shared by many of the Joans narrating this glorious feminist polemic about Australia's history and women's place in it. Joan the convict jumps ship, while Joan the laundress reads people's secrets in their washing. An aborigine Joan rides off on a gentleman's bicycle with filched gold nuggets in her bodice, and a homesteader Joan does fierce battle with the pernicious gum trees on her allotment. And then, throughout, there is our twentieth-century Joan, whose own history of love and ambition is ingeniously embroidered with these bits of lives lived before her. Like Woolf and Weldon, Kate Grenville is expert at bringing to light facets of female experience that usually remain ignored or denied, but she has a sexiness and a generosity all her own.

THE LAST TO GO, by Rand Richards Cooper (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $16.95). If this novel had been written by a woman of fifty-nine, as you might believe the first half was, it would be just another middle-class marriage breaking up, thinly disguised as fiction. But this story of a postwar courtship and of raising children in the suburbs in the fifties and sixties was in fact written by a young man of thirty. His chronicle shifts in point of view from the mother to the father to the two daughters and the son. The elder daughter falls afoul of her parents' nervousness about "hippies"; the younger is attracted to ineducable hulks. The son comes of age as the parents' marriage is breaking up, and the narrative shifts, startlingly,

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to the first person. This half is in some ways less impressive (that is, it seems more autobiographical), but it is also where the young author reveals himself to be more than exceptionally compassionate—where he shows himself to be a writer.

PORTERHOUSE BLUE, by Tom Sharpe (Atlantic Monthly; $8.95, paper). Porterhouse is a Cambridge college whose principal product is rich jocks. A Porterhouse Blue is a stroke, the disabling kind, likely to be brought on by the sumptuous dishes served in the dining hall—or, it turns out, by the goings on when the staff is confronted by a new, politically liberal Master. He proposes, among other horrors, a self-service cafeteria and the firing of the college servants—to recoup the endowment squandered by a Master who gambled—and academic standards of admission. The Master has to contend with a hellishly philanthropic wife; a deaf chaplain; a graduate fellow who in striving to lose his virginity sets loose upon the college two gross of condoms; a powerful alumnus with a purchased degree; and Skullion, the college porter, who is out to get him. The plotting cannot be faulted. Fates, schemes, and antithetical points of view and purposes smoothly collide on every page. For some, this adroitness, along with the two hundred and eighty-eight condoms, will make for non-stop laughter. But the best comedy arises from the loony logic of character, and the characters presented here are no more than their established tics and opinions, acted upon by external circumstance.

OWNING JOLENE, by Shelby Hearon (Knopf; $17.95). Nineteen-year-old Jolene spent most of her childhood shuttling from suburb to suburb in Texas as her separated parents—a wacky piano-teacher mother with a lust for adventure and an oil-rig-salesman father who wanted to give Jolene "a normal life"—fought with each other by fighting over her. When we meet Jolene, she is living in neutral territory, with her Aunt Glenna and Uncle Brogan, who are affectionate, laissez-faire guardians but basically clueless about her predicament: whom to belong to, and how, ultimately, not to belong to anyone but herself. Jolene puts these

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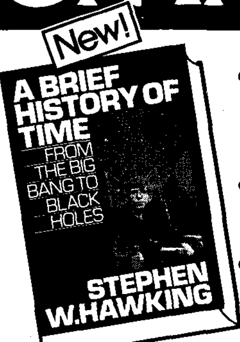
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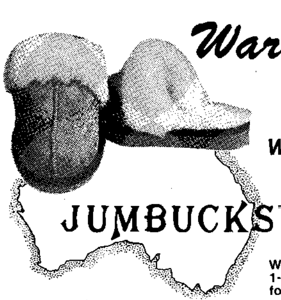

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questions to rest mostly through a shocking incident perpetrated by her much older boyfriend, a celebrated artist who "paints in his head" while they make love, and for whom she has been posing nude. The book is full of snappy dialogue and manifestations of contemporary Texas culture, from the funky to the absurd, and the comic tone sometimes seems to be at odds with the disturbing issue of exploitation, which keeps cropping up in the story but is never adequately addressed.

GENERAL

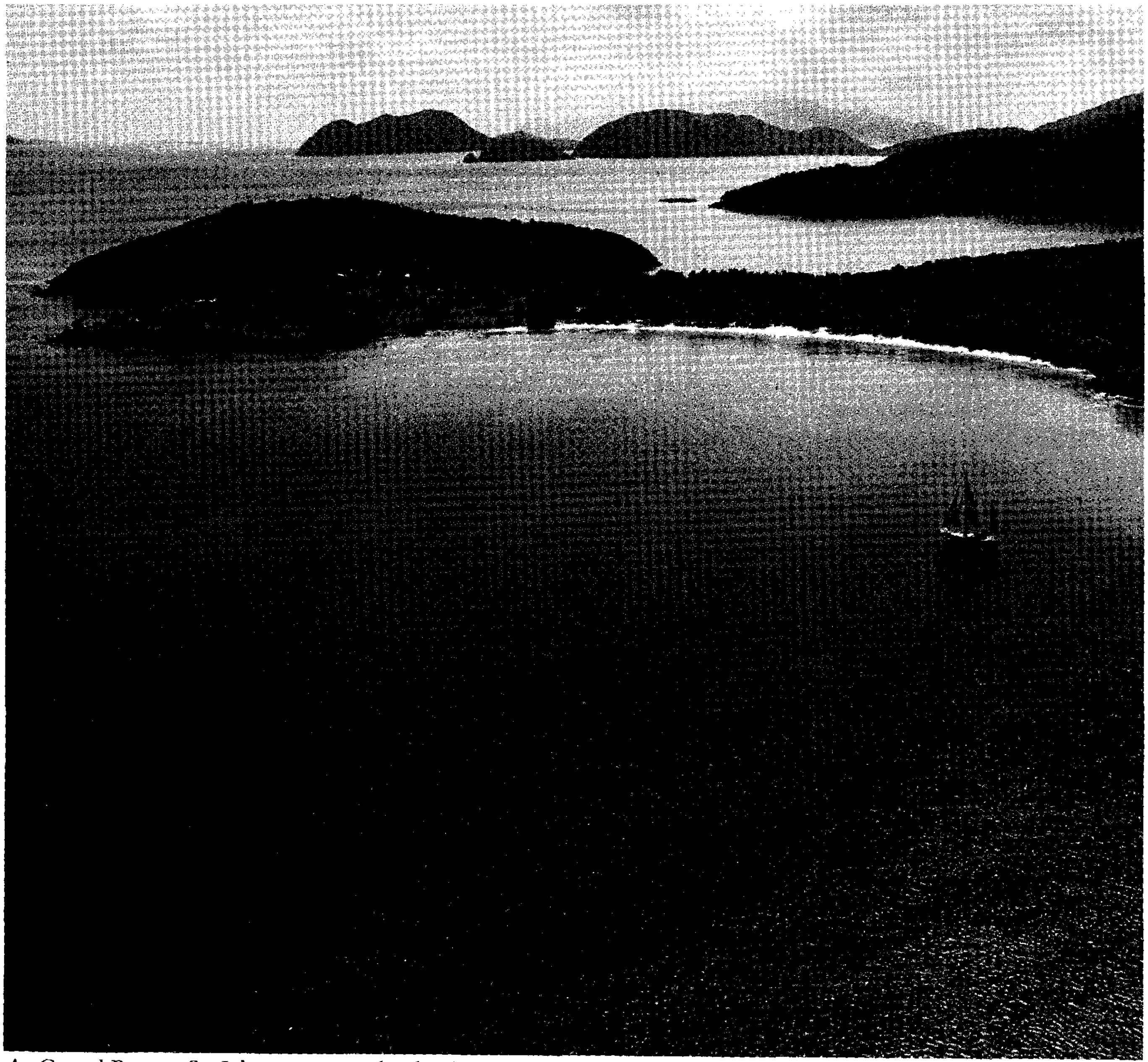
A Tinker and a Poor Man: John Bunyan and His Church, 1628-1688, by Christopher Hill (Knopf; $22.95). The author of "The Pilgrim's Progress" was a poor village boy who got his earliest intellectual stimulation from the political and religious arguments among his fellow-soldiers in the Parliamentary army. In the sixteen-forties, what Mr. Hill calls "the total breakdown of authority" permitted an unprecedented freedom of expression for the common people of England, as well as the flowering of popular literature—the literature in which Bunyan recorded his lifelong quest for religious certainty. The author, a specialist in the period, has the background at his fingertips; we learn, for example, the details of Bunyan's dealings with printers. The Restoration reëstablished the Church of England, whereupon Bunyan was imprisoned for Nonconformist preaching; he remained in prison for twelve years. Persecution intensified his faith and his literary efforts. Mr. Hill writes, "Bunyan wanted the Millennium and got the novel."

The Selected Correspondence of Kenneth Burke and Malcolm Cowley, 1915-1981, edited by Paul Jay (Viking; $29.95). The exchange of letters from which this remarkable book has been assembled began when Burke and Cowley were schoolmates in Pittsburgh, and continued for almost seven decades. This is the chronicle of a literary friendship, with emphasis on the literary, for literature was the passion of both young men, and their vocation as they grew older. The letters touch upon nearly every significant development in American writing and criticism in the period covered, and are full of references to writers and poets known to one or both of the correspondents. The book is also by way of being an intellectual history of the United States during the twentieth century, seen from a left-liberal vantage point; it ends with both men—today in their nineties—in rural retirement and full of honors.

War and Peace in Central America, by Frank McNeil (Scribners; $19.95). The author of this intelligent book, a foreign-service officer who quit in 1987 after thirty years, offers historical perspective as well as personal testimony. He deplores the fact that our domestic politics have "Vietnamized" our Central American policy, and that liberals and conservatives talk past each other, trade preposterous accusations, and defend their respective extremist protégés whether or not their actions are defensible. The author explains how several Central American states arrived at their present condition of tyranny and instability: twentieth-century economic pressures have played a part, but the "crisis of legitimacy" has its roots in nineteenth-century political history; and, in describing the difficulties that have so far impeded the achievement of democracy, he emphasizes variety and complexity.

Personal Exposures, by Elliott Erwitt (Norton; $60). A retrospective made up of selected examples of the work of this photographer, who got out of the Army and signed up with Robert Capa's agency, Magnum, in 1953. The pictures were taken in all kinds of places—Hollywood, East Hampton, Moscow, Florence, Rio de Janeiro, Alamogordo (at the epicenter of the first atom-bomb explosion), and Hiroshima (at the epicenter of the second)—and the camera is most often aimed at aspects of the human condition, comic, tragic, humdrum. Mr. Erwitt likes visual puns, and he is good at capturing them (or, perhaps, at setting them up), and some of his best pictures are of dogs interacting with human beings. The captions are minimal: place and date. That suffices for such shots as the one of Nixon jawing at Khrushchev during the celebrated Moscow kitchen confrontation; some of the others need a little more.

ROCKRESORTS



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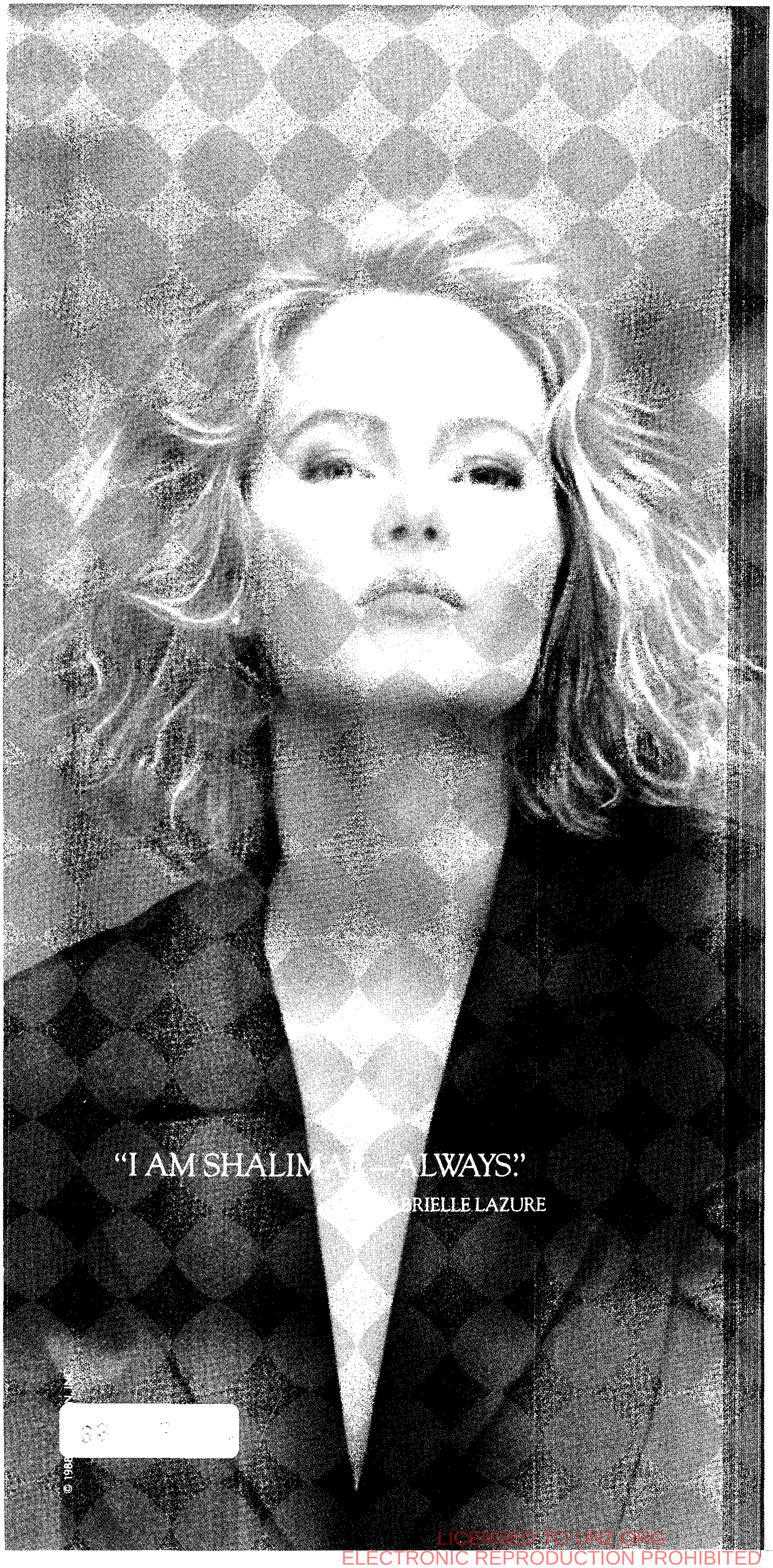
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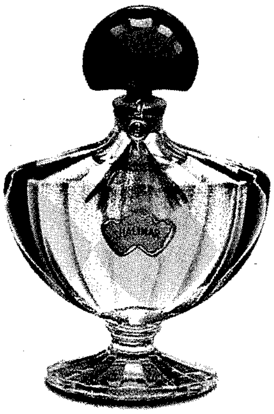

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